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# THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

HER MISSION, SACRAMENTS  
AND DISCIPLINE

BY

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## PREFACE

IN the present volume no attempt has been made to propound any new theories, but it has been my aim to set out in simple fashion the old doctrine of the Church and the Sacraments, covering as much ground as possible within the limits assigned, proving the position maintained by frequent reference to Scripture, and illustrating from the writings of the early Fathers and other important documents of the Primitive Church. Especial care has been taken to elucidate the Sacramental teaching of the Anglican Church since the Reformation, and to show that she has held fast by the Scriptures and Primitive doctrine. Continental Formularies and other writings of the sixteenth century are also frequently quoted, for it is by comparison and contrast with these that the true character and tone of our own Formularies become most clearly apparent. It will be seen that the first two chapters are introductory to the subject. Chapter III., which analyses and explains the Notes of the Church, gives the outline of the body of the work. The remaining chapters are an expansion of the theme and treatment of it in detail. Indebtedness to other writers has been indicated, when possible, in the footnotes, but I desire

particularly to express my obligation to Palmer's work on *The Church*, to Robert Owen's *Manual of Dogmatic Theology*, and amongst more recent works to Gore's *Church and the Ministry*, Strong's *Manual of Theology*, Bishop Churton's *Missionary's Foundation of Doctrine*, Mason's *Faith of the Gospel*, Denney's *Studies in Theology*, Moberly's *Ministerial Priesthood*, Morgan Dix's *Sacramental System*, and the Essays on the Church and the Sacraments in *Lux Mundi*. My best thanks are due to my friend and colleague the Rev. Dr. G. W. Wade, who has kindly revised the proof-sheets of the work.

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# THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

## CHAPTER I IMPORTANCE AND INTEREST OF THE SUBJECT

THE subject of the Church cannot be ignored by the thoughtful Christian, because Christianity is essentially social. Those who have been, as individual souls, united to Christ are also *ipso facto* brought near to one another. It was our Lord's work in the first place to restore man to a state of union with God, which had been interrupted by sin; God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.<sup>1</sup> But in thus restoring men to a life of communion with God, Christ also bound them by a new, by a supernatural and spiritual, tie to one another. He reconciled both Jew and Gentile unto God *in one Body*.<sup>2</sup> For He is our Peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us,<sup>3</sup> so that for those who by Baptism into Christ have put on Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, but all are *one* in Christ Jesus.<sup>4</sup> Hence in the lofty delineation which is given in the Epistle to the Hebrews of the glorious dispensation into which Christians have entered, the thought of *association* underlies the whole. "Ye are come," the writer says, "unto mount Zion, and unto

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. ii. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. iii. 27, 28.

the *city* of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the *general assembly and church* of the firstborn who are enrolled in Heaven.”<sup>1</sup> Christianity being thus in its nature social, it is not surprising to find that it has, as a power in the world, always manifested itself in social forms. It is a matter of history that even those Christians who have laid hold most firmly upon that side of Christian doctrine which appeals to man as an individual, and who have theoretically treated Christianity as a scheme for the salvation of the individual soul, have nevertheless, when seeking to influence others and when undertaking missionary enterprise, found themselves forced to be Ecclesiastical, to become an association—call it by what name they may, church, school, sect—with doctrines defined and with some amount of organisation perfected. This character or tendency of Christianity is due to an ineradicable characteristic of the nature of man. Man’s best and highest life can never be lived in isolation and apart from the lives of his fellow-men. He is a social animal, and since the aim and purpose of Christianity is the salvation of the whole man, the perfecting of his highest activity and the full development of his powers in every direction, it is bound to take a social line—the line of all true progress—and to work practically amongst men as a *Church*. From whatever cause, whether it be from the working of the Divine Spirit within, or from pressure of external circumstances, in which, however, a reverent mind will discern the guiding hand of Providence—from whatever cause Christianity has taken a certain form in the world, and it is incumbent upon the thoughtful man, necessary for the Christian, that he should endeavour to understand this.

It is further impossible for the Christian to leave the subject of the Church out of account because the social aspect of Christianity, the theory and practice of the organic and organised Body of those who accept the Gospel, occupies so large a place in the sacred writings of the New Testament. It is there recorded that the Lord Himself, when He had

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 22, 23.

educated S. Peter to a true faith in His Divine Person, directly spoke of *building His Church* upon the Rock of His faithful disciple.<sup>1</sup> In pursuance of this design of Christ we find that in the historical record in Acts, and from the incidental allusions in the Epistles, the Apostles are represented as admitting their converts into fellowship with themselves, and thus founding, wherever they preached the Gospel, a visible community of saints, based on the Sacrament of Baptism,<sup>2</sup> whose unity is expressed in the Sacrament of the Eucharist<sup>3</sup>—a society whose accredited missionaries proclaimed to men the definite doctrine of an unchangeable Evangelical tradition,<sup>4</sup> and wherein all things were done in due order,<sup>5</sup> with a proper division of functions of the several members,<sup>6</sup> an Apostle having general authority to order each particular community of Christians in accord with the common tradition both of faith and practice.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, this aspect of Christianity as an organic community appears in the New Testament not only as an idea of practical importance, but is set before us as a grand conception commanding the imagination and the heart. The lofty conception of the unity of believers in Christ entertained by the Apostles themselves is indicated by the names or titles given to it in the New Testament writings.

The regular application of the term *Ecclesia* to the company of believers is easy to understand when we remember that it was founded on the specially impressive saying of our Lord to S. Peter, but its significance can only be fully appreciated by taking account of its Old Testament usage as a title of the general assembly of Israel as the people of God. The Hebrew words which are represented by the Greek word *Ecclesia* suggest “no mere agglomeration of men, but rather a unity carried out in the joint action of many members, each having his own responsibilities, the action of each and all

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 18.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts ii. 38; xix. 1-5; 1 Cor. x. 1-4; Eph. iv. 5.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. x. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. i. 6-9.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 12-30.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 17; xi. 2, 16; xv. 3.

being regulated by a supreme law or order.”<sup>1</sup> The name *Ecclesia*, in the New Testament, accordingly marks the whole body of Christians as the congregation of God with its order, its mutual duties and responsibilities—the people of God gathered in one body to exercise their privileges and to enjoy their rights—the analogy and the spiritual successor of the congregation of Israel so conspicuous in the ancient Scriptures. This thought of the Christian *Ecclesia* as having succeeded to the Israel of God, and as accordingly inheriting its titles, is set forth with special vividness by S. Peter. “Ye, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Because it is contained in Scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be put to shame. For you therefore which believe is the preciousness: . . . Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession.”<sup>2</sup>

The new dispensation which it was Christ’s mission to inaugurate was heralded by the Baptist as the *Kingdom of Heaven*, and this title the Kingdom of Heaven, or of God, is the usual one in the mouth of the Lord Himself. It is almost entirely replaced in the Apostolic writings by the name *Ecclesia*; and from the fact that our Lord, when specially instructing the Apostles for their life-work, before His Ascension spoke to them of “the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God,”<sup>3</sup> we can have little doubt that He meant the Society of His disciples to be the realisation of the Kingdom of God. That it was also viewed as such by the Apostles is apparent from the occasional use of the title Kingdom of Heaven, of God, or of Christ, in the New Testament writings outside the Gospels. Thus S. Paul testifies in his address at Miletus to the Ephesian elders that he had gone among them preaching the Kingdom of God,<sup>4</sup> while in his letter to the Ephesians he rebukes all forms of uncleanness

<sup>1</sup> HORT, *Christian Ecclesia*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> 1 S. Peter ii. 5-9.

<sup>3</sup> Acts i. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xx. 25.



on the ground that no whoremonger or unclean person hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God;<sup>1</sup> and again he has reason to admonish the Corinthians that the Kingdom of God, as administered by himself, is not in word but in power.<sup>2</sup> This high title marks the Christian community as the fulfilment of the ideal Messianic Kingdom, in which the saints are fellow-citizens;<sup>3</sup> that long-expected Kingdom of the Christ which is the subject of so many glowing Old Testament prophecies, and which was the object of the aspirations of the faithful remnant of God's people, as destined to accomplish the restoration of Israel and the ingathering of the Gentiles.<sup>4</sup>

The conception of the body of believers as the *Bride of Christ* emphasises the closeness of their relation as a whole to Him, by representing it as analogous to the sacred tie by which man and wife become one flesh.<sup>5</sup> As His Bride the Church receives the fulness of Christ's life and of His cherishing love,<sup>6</sup> and while the title thus suggests the highest and most inspiring thoughts, it at the same time lays the Christian community under the strictest obligation to purity both in life and doctrine.<sup>7</sup> This thought of the Church as Christ's Bride of which S. Paul makes so powerful a use,<sup>8</sup> takes a prominent and very impressive place in the Revelation of S. John, where the consummation of the present Dispensation is set forth under the figure of the celebration of the marriage of the Lamb.<sup>9</sup> The thought of the unity of God's people as His Bride is one which, like the two aspects of the Church already noted—the Ecclesia and the Kingdom—has its origin in the Old Testament.<sup>10</sup> Such titles as applied to the Church in the New Testament indicate accordingly that the Christian community is the fulfilment and embodiment of the inspiring

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v. 5.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. ii. 19.

<sup>4</sup> See what is said of Simeon in S. Luke ii. 25, 26, and compare the words of his song in verses 30-2.

<sup>5</sup> Eph. v. 29, 30.

<sup>6</sup> Eph. v. 25.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Eph. v. 23-32; 2 Cor. xi. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Rev. xix. 7, 8; xxi. 2, 9.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Hos. ii. 19; Isa. liv. 5; Ezek. xvi. 7 *et seqq.*



conceptions and lofty ideals of the Divinely taught Hebrew nation.

The essentially corporate character of true religion is most emphatically indicated by the New Testament conception of Christians as a whole as constituting the *Body of Christ*. This is a title which suggests in the first place the thought of mystical union with, and vital relation to, Christ the ruling Head,<sup>1</sup> but it necessarily carries with it the further thought of the healthy growth and progress of the Body,<sup>2</sup> through each one of the many interdependent members duly fulfilling its own appointed function.<sup>3</sup> When in Scripture the unity of believers in Christ is spoken of as His Body, we are evidently intended to learn that if Christianity is to advance and have its due effect in the world, it can only be by action in its corporate capacity, by the united life and action and by the mutual co-operation of the members, each in his own proper office.

Besides the consideration of the prominence of the conception of the Church in the Scriptures, a further reason for the necessity of the study of our subject lies in the fact that it finds a place alike in the ancient Creeds of Christendom, and in later Confessions of Faith of whatever theological complexion. In later Confessions, such as the great multitude which appeared in the sixteenth century, that the subject of the Church is treated fully is, of course, only what we are prepared to find, since the conception of the Church, its authority, its organisation, and its discipline were amongst the chief points of debate and divergence between opposed schools of theologians in that unsettled period. At that time, moreover, even those who broke away from the unity of the historic Church laid strong emphasis upon the idea of the Church and wrote at length upon it, the more so on account of their anxiety to vindicate their right to a place within the true Church of Christ. Hence Articles upon, and definitions of, the Church occupy an important place not only in our own

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i. 23; v. 30; Col. i. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. iv. 12-16.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12 *et seqq.*

English Articles and in the Decrees of the Synod of Trent, but also in the Confessions of the Protestants and the Reformed, as later in the various Formularies of subsequent seceders. But it is remarkable that not only in such comparatively late Formularies, drawn up at times when the subject of the Church was in debate, do we find it treated; in the early Creeds of united Christendom, which were formulated before such controversies arose, the Church is presented to us as an object of faith.

We are, therefore, led next to consider the significance of the fact that the Church is thus referred to in the Creeds. When we say we believe in the Holy Catholic Church we do not merely recognise a fact, we acknowledge a principle. That Christian men are, from whatever cause or causes, working in the world as members of a society, bound together by certain laws and ordinances, and organised under certain rulers to do their common work, is bare fact appreciable by the senses, and therefore not matter of faith at all in the proper acceptance of the term. But faith comes in because by it we apprehend the true and hidden character of the outward Body which is visible to our eyes. By the use of reason in the study of Scripture, of tradition, and of history we may arrive at much knowledge concerning the Church, its marks, the conditions and results of its working. But it is by faith we apprehend the Church as a corporate Body possessing special powers and graces conferred by God the Holy Spirit; it is by faith we acknowledge that the whole community of the Baptized has been lifted from the natural order into a higher and supernatural order; it is by faith that, in spite of manifold difficulties, shortcomings, and failures, we rest upon Christ's promise that against His Rock-founded Church the gates of hell shall not prevail.<sup>1</sup> On the precise wording of the clauses in the Creeds relating to the Church some words of comment are perhaps necessary. Rufinus of Aquileia, writing at the close of the fourth century, lays stress on the omission of the preposition *in* before the words "Holy Catholic Church" in

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 18.

the current Latin Creed, as though it had doctrinal significance;<sup>1</sup> and from the time of Rufinus theologians, especially in the West, have drawn attention to the omission, and have made more or less emphatic distinction between believing *in* God and believing (that there is) a Holy Catholic Church. To refer to one or two modern examples: Dr. Mason expands the article of the Creed in question, "I believe (in the existence of) the Holy Catholic Church";<sup>2</sup> and Dr. Denney writes, "Christians professed to believe that there is a holy Catholic Church . . . We do not indeed believe *in* it, as we believe in God, or in Christ; we do not commit ourselves to it for salvation as we do to the Redeemer Himself."<sup>3</sup> In the Apostles' Creed, which is of Western growth, the preposition indeed is not expressed, though perhaps, as Bishop Pearson seems to have thought, it is intended to be understood. In the Nicene Creed the preposition is expressed in the original Greek (πιστεύομεν . . . εἰς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον . . . εἰς μίαν ἁγίαν καθολικὴν καὶ ἀποστολικὴν Ἐκκλησίαν, we believe . . . *in* the Holy Ghost . . . *in* One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church),<sup>4</sup> and the distinction above noted as common in the West is disregarded in Oriental Creeds generally. It must accordingly be admitted that it is very doubtful whether it can be pressed.<sup>5</sup> As we believe *in* God the Holy Spirit, so also we believe *in* the Church as sanctified by Him and as the sphere of His unfailing operation,<sup>6</sup> and accordingly we commit ourselves to it for salvation. For, if the Apostles' Creed be viewed in the light of its origin as the Baptismal Symbol, it is evident that expression of belief in the Holy Catholic

<sup>1</sup> *Comment. in Symbol. Apost.*, § 36.

<sup>2</sup> *Faith of the Gospel*, p. 216.

<sup>3</sup> *Studies in Theology*, p. 174.

<sup>4</sup> The original Western form of the Nicene Creed also had the preposition "*in* unam, sanctam Catholicam et Apostolicam Ecclesiam," but this was altered after the time of Rufinus to "unam . . . Ecclesiam," whence our present English form "I believe One Catholic and Apostolic Church."

<sup>5</sup> Bishop Pearson's opinion was that "the particle added or subtracted does not make any difference" (*Exposition of the Creed*, Art. ix.)

<sup>6</sup> Cf. AQUINAS, *Summa Theol. Secunda Secundæ*, Qu. i. Art. ix. But it is to be noted that S. Thomas explains away the preposition *in*.

Church implies an acknowledgment on the part of the Catechumen of an obligation to seek admission to it by Baptism, and to continue a faithful member of it.

Having emphasised the importance of the fact that the Church is mentioned in the Creed, and considered the exact wording of the clauses where it is mentioned, we may go on to indicate the deductions which may naturally be drawn from the position and manner of its mention.

For the position which the Article on the Church occupies in the Creed is as suggestive as the fact of its presence there. The Apostles' Creed naturally falls into two main divisions. In the first part, down to the words "I believe in the Holy Ghost," is contained the doctrine of God the Holy Trinity and of the Incarnation; while in the latter part are recounted the benefits which flow to man from the Revelation of God in Christ, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and everlasting life. The Article wherein we profess our belief in the Church forms the connecting link between the two parts, and the fact that it does so may be taken to indicate that it is through the working of the Church, through man's membership in it, that faith is designed to have its due effect in a holy life here and a blessed hereafter. The place in which the Church stands in the Creed thus points to it as a Divine Institution, the Divinely constituted society in which those who have faith in God appropriate the spiritual blessings He bestows, and as members of which they have a sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life.<sup>1</sup> Thus the position of the mention of the Church, as well as the precise terms in which we profess our belief *in* the Church (using the same formula as when we profess our belief *in* God) alike mark the Church as a Divine Society. It can only be because the Church is God's Church, and no mere human invention,<sup>2</sup> that we make mention of it in the

<sup>1</sup> We gather from S. Cyprian's letters that the Baptismal interrogation in his time ran thus: "Dost thou believe in the remission of sins and eternal life *through the Holy Church*?"—(Epp. lxi. 7; lxx. 2, ed. Goldhorn.)

<sup>2</sup> Our word *Church* is properly an adjective, signifying *The Lord's*.

Creed in such a position, or indeed mention it therein at all.

But we have not yet exhausted the significance of the position which the Article on the Church holds in the Creeds. Alike in the Apostles' and in the Nicene Creed the mention of the Church follows, not directly upon the recital of the work of the Incarnate Son, but immediately upon the expression of belief in God the Holy Spirit. By this order of the clauses we are given to understand that the Church is, in a special sense, the sphere of the Holy Spirit's operation, and this is set forth as a deduction in the summary of the Creed given in the Church Catechism. In our Catechism, in answer to the question, "What dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of thy Belief?" the concluding portion of the Creed is thus shortly paraphrased: "I learn to believe . . . thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost Who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God." That the organisation and continued operation of the Church is due to the action of the Holy Spirit is plain from Scripture. The life and work of Christ, His sufferings and death, His Resurrection and Ascension were, of course, the necessary ground and preparation for the new Dispensation, but Christ Himself continually points onward to the coming of the Comforter as in fact inaugurating that Dispensation upon earth. It is by reason of their reception of the Holy Ghost that our Lord endues the Apostles with power, as rulers of the Church, to remit and retain sins.<sup>1</sup> Hence, before His Ascension, He expressly charged the Apostles not to commence their ministry at once but to tarry till they should be endued with power from on high,<sup>2</sup> waiting at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, which they had heard from Himself—their Baptism by the Holy Ghost.<sup>3</sup> The Day of Pentecost, when in fulfilment of this promise the Spirit descended upon the Apostles, with the immediate consequence of the first missionary sermon and the addition of three thousand souls to their company, was the Birthday of the Christian Church. Further, as we attentively read the

<sup>1</sup> S. John xx. 22, 23.

<sup>2</sup> S. Luke xxiv. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Acts i. 4, 5.

Scriptures we note that as it was the descent of the Holy Spirit which called the Church into life, so its organisation and continued working is guided and controlled by His ever-present activity. It was the Holy Spirit Who directed the separation of Barnabas and Saul to their work,<sup>1</sup> and Who guided the course of S. Paul's missionary journeys.<sup>2</sup> It was He Who inspired the decision of the Apostolic Council in a difficult crisis.<sup>3</sup> It is the special gift of the Holy Spirit that is conveyed by imposition of the Apostles' hands.<sup>4</sup> It is the Holy Ghost Who makes men overseers in the Church of God,<sup>5</sup> and it is His special grace which enables the pastors of the Church to be faithful to their trust.<sup>6</sup> At the laver of regeneration men receive the renewing of the Holy Ghost.<sup>7</sup> By One Spirit Christians are all baptized into One Body, and they have all been made to drink into One Spirit.<sup>8</sup> It is the indwelling Presence of the Spirit that inspires and sanctifies the Christian community,<sup>9</sup> so as to make it a living Temple of God, a communion of Saints, for "in the Church," as Irenæus shortly puts it, "God has placed the whole operation of the Spirit."<sup>10</sup> Yet we must not think that the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church in any way displaces that of the Son, but it is grounded upon it and completes it, because the Spirit works in and through the Body of Christ, thus accomplishing that mystical union which is the fulfilment of the purpose of the Incarnation, and the crown and full development of God's creative work. For the Church is nothing else than the company of saints, who, being united by the Holy Spirit to Christ their Head, are one Body with Him, and have communion with their Lord and with one another, so that the Body of Christ lives by the Spirit of Christ, even as the body of man lives by the spirit of man.<sup>11</sup> Thus we see that the Spirit does not take the place of an absent Mediator,

<sup>1</sup> Acts xiii. 2.<sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 6, 7.<sup>3</sup> Acts xv. 28.<sup>4</sup> Acts viii. 17; xix. 6.<sup>5</sup> Acts xx. 28.<sup>6</sup> 2 Tim. i. 14.<sup>7</sup> Titus iii. 5.<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 13.<sup>9</sup> Rom. viii. 9; 1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19.<sup>10</sup> *Adv. Her.* III. xxiv. 1.<sup>11</sup> See S. AUGUSTINE, *In Jo. Tract*, xxvi. 13.



but secures to us in the Church His effective Presence. It is the Holy Spirit's function to reveal to us the things of Christ. Historically Christ Himself is the Revealer of God to man, the only Begotten Son declared the Father.<sup>1</sup> The office of the Spirit is to take the things of Christ and show them to us,<sup>2</sup> to make real to an innumerable company of men of all ages and nations the Revelation which Christ gave, to bring it home to the souls of men as full of meaning, of life and of power. To the world the Revelation of Christ is dead and powerless. No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost.<sup>3</sup> He makes Christ to be to us far more than one of many illuminating teachers and inspiring examples; He brings us into direct spiritual contact with Christ as a living Lord. By the action of the Holy Spirit at the waters of Baptism we are incorporated into the living Body of Christ,<sup>4</sup> and made His very members.<sup>5</sup> Again in the worship of the Church it is the Spirit Who helpeth our infirmities, when we know not how to pray as we ought, and maketh intercession for us according to the will of God.<sup>6</sup> Our worship is effectual indeed because of the Intercession of Christ, but it is made real for each of us by the working of the Holy Spirit in us as Christ's members. By the action of the same Spirit the Real Presence of Christ is secured at the altars of the Church. The Bread and Wine of our Oblation are made to us the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ,<sup>7</sup> and in partaking of

<sup>1</sup> S. John i. 18.

<sup>2</sup> S. John xvi. 14, 15.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. iii. 27.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 12, 27.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. viii. 26, 27.

<sup>7</sup> This truth is expressly recognised in the earliest extant forms for Consecration of the Eucharist. The Invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the elements forms part of the Consecration Prayer in the Eastern Liturgies generally, and, according to a general agreement of Liturgiologists, also in the Gallican and Spanish Liturgies. It has also been incorporated in the Communion Office of the (Episcopal) Church of Scotland and has thence passed to the American Office. The agency of the Holy Spirit in the Consecration of the Eucharistic Oblation was recognised in the Anglican Office of 1549, but this recognition has, unfortunately, been dropped since 1552, and is wanting also in the Roman rite. See further LUCKOCK, *Divine Liturgy*, pp. 292 *et seqq.*

the same His Divine Life is knit with ours, so that we evermore dwell in Him and He in us. Thus by the Spirit's operation in the Church is the effective and abiding Presence of Christ secured to His people, and not only so but by the grace of the same Spirit they are conformed to His image; "we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit."<sup>1</sup>

The Scriptural doctrine of the Church being such as has been above outlined, the interest of the study of the subject, the power which the conception has exercised over men, and the devotion which the Church has everywhere commanded can be no matters of wonder. God's choice of Zion in old time made her for His faithful people the object of a most passionate attachment, such as is without parallel in the ancient world; and the enthusiastic loyalty, the patriotic devotion which gathered round the earthly Jerusalem has been transferred, and legitimately transferred, to the new and heavenly Jerusalem, the City of the Living God.<sup>2</sup> As Mother<sup>3</sup> she has commanded man's filial reverence, gratitude, and service, and she has even inspired a passion of self-sacrificing devotion and love such as man renders to the chosen mistress of his heart.<sup>4</sup> In such spirit of entire devotion men have fulfilled the prophet's rapt vision of the glories of restored Jerusalem. Kings have been her nursing-fathers and queens her nursing-mothers.<sup>5</sup> Men have gathered themselves together to come unto her, her sons have come from far, and the forces of the Gentiles have come unto her; they have brought gold and incense that they might show the praises of the Lord.<sup>6</sup> Men have endowed her with their worldly goods and have given up all that flesh holds dear for her sake. Working in the spirit of love and enthusiasm she inspires, men have evolved fresh harmonies of form, of sound, and of colour to adorn her service and to do her honour. New glories of architecture have appeared; her shrines have been made

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.      <sup>2</sup> Gal. iv. 26; Eph. ii. 19; Heb. xii. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iv. 26.      <sup>4</sup> Isa. lxii. 5.      <sup>5</sup> Isa. xlix. 23.      <sup>6</sup> Isa. lx. 4-6.



beautiful with wealth of sacred art in painting and in statuary, and been decked with storied windows. Her services of worship have called forth the sweetest strains of music man's genius could devise. In every way men have striven to express outwardly the beauty of her holiness which stirred their souls. The King's daughter is all-glorious within, and men have clothed her with wrought gold.<sup>1</sup> The power and true greatness of the idea of the Church is perhaps even more conspicuously evidenced in the enthusiastic recognition and admiration it wins from minds that have been either altogether or to a great extent outside the range of Catholic belief and tradition. Of man's realised ideals, under which he marches and fights, with victorious assurance, in this life-battle, Carlyle puts the Church in the foremost place. "The Church; what a word was there; richer than Golconda and the treasures of the world! In the heart of the remotest mountains rises the little kirk; the dead all slumbering round it, under their white memorial-stones, 'in hope of a happy resurrection':—dull wert thou, O Reader, if never in any hour (say of moaning midnight, when the kirk hung spectral in the sky, and Being was as if swallowed up of Darkness) it spoke to thee—things unspeakable, that went into thy soul's soul. Strong was he that had a Church, what we can call a Church: he stood thereby, though 'in the centre of Immensities, in the conflux of Eternities,' yet manlike towards God and man; the vague shoreless Universe had become for him a firm City, and dwelling which he knew. Such virtue was in Belief; in these words well spoken: *I believe*. Well might men prize their *Credo*, and raise stateliest Temples for it, and reverend Hierarchies, and give it the tithe of their substance; it was worth living for and dying for."<sup>2</sup> In this age of many competing sects, and of countless new panaceas for the ills of struggling and suffering humanity, still less than ever can we afford to be without the Church-ideal, and indeed, although Carlyle's second great ideal of Kingship has in large measure given way before the spirit of Democracy, there is

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xlv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *French Revolution*, vol. i. p. 8.

abundant evidence that for earnest and thoughtful men the Church ideal is forceful as ever. "Nothing but a Church will do," says a recent writer. "All the other schemes of democracy have come to naught for want of that. The lecture-platform is no substitute for Sinai. Democracy is a Religion, or nothing, with its doctrine, its form, its ritual, its ceremonies, its cenobites, its government as a Church—above all, its organised sacrifice of the altar, the sacrifice of self. This is the deepest craving of human nature."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> RICHARD WHITEING, *No. 5, John Street.*

## CHAPTER II

### THE CHURCH VISIBLE

CHRIST'S intention as to the means whereby the Revelation He came to bring should be propagated in the world may be gathered from an attentive study of the Gospel narratives. He did not Himself in Person preach the Gospel to the world at large; on the contrary, He expressly confined His public ministry of teaching and healing to a very limited area, recognising and avowing that His mission was to the house of Israel.<sup>1</sup> Further, we observe that even within the narrow limits of Israel, to whom He was directly sent, Christ did not openly and without reserve proclaim the truth He came to bring, but spoke to the many in parables.<sup>2</sup> He even forbade His disciples to speak publicly of His claims and of the truth about Himself which He was leading them to apprehend,<sup>3</sup> and we find it repeatedly recorded that He strictly charged those who had been healed by Him that they should not make Him known,<sup>4</sup> silencing also the demons whom He cast out because they knew Him.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, when the fame of His deeds of love and compassion could not be hid, and when men showed a disposition at once enthusiastically to recognise His claims—at such times, we read, the Lord withdrew Himself from the people,<sup>6</sup> and on more than one occasion He refused to manifest His power openly because

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xv. 24.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xiii. 10-13.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 20; xvii. 9; S. Mark viii. 30; S. Luke ix. 21.

<sup>4</sup> S. Matt. viii. 4; ix. 30; xii. 16; S. Mark iii. 12; v. 43; S. Luke v. 14.

<sup>5</sup> S. Mark i. 25, 34; S. Luke iv. 41.

<sup>6</sup> S. John vi. 15.

His hour was not yet come.<sup>1</sup> He committed Himself not to man.<sup>2</sup> It is equally clear from the pages of the Gospels that the Lord made no attempt, as the founders of some widely-accepted religions have done—*e.g.* Buddha and Mohammed—to secure the permanence of His teaching by evolving and completing a system of religious belief and practice which should be embodied by Himself, or by disciples under His direction, in a code or book. Neither by Himself proclaiming it abroad to the world, nor by stereotyping it in a written document, did the Word of God set forth to man the Revelation of the Father, but by devoting Himself to the training of a little band of chosen followers with a view to sending them forth to gather others into their company, and to be the nucleus of a new *society*—a Divine Kingdom—in the earth. “Follow Me” are the Lord’s words to those whom He first called to discipleship, “and I will make you fishers of men.”<sup>3</sup> The long and patient training of the Apostolic company, the mission of the seventy,<sup>4</sup> the charges to the twelve with minute directions as to their future conduct,<sup>5</sup> the definite commissions given after the Resurrection and before the Ascension,<sup>6</sup> all point unmistakably to the fact that the Master was preparing the inner circle of His followers for a missionary life. Before He suffered on Calvary He keeps the Apostles near Himself, for the most part, in retirement from the world; after His Ascension, when the promised gift of the Spirit has been received, then they are to go forth to the world with their message.<sup>7</sup> But Christ can only have pursued this method because He viewed His earthly life as not comprising within its short span His whole purpose, but rather as preparatory, as the foundation of a new state of things. This new state of things He Himself inaugurated; and its beginnings, in His own hands, took the shape of a *visible company* of men united

<sup>1</sup> S. John ii. 3, 4; vii. 3-8.

<sup>2</sup> S. John ii. 23-5.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. iv. 19.

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke x. 1 *et seqq.*

<sup>5</sup> S. Matt. x. 5 *et seqq.*; S. Mark vi. 7 *et seqq.*; S. Luke ix. 1 *et seqq.*

<sup>6</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; S. Mark xvi. 15.

<sup>7</sup> S. Luke xxiv. 47-9; Acts i. 4, 8.

by a common faith in, and devotion to, their Lord, and entrusted with His Gospel for proclamation to the world. Christ trained this chosen company to believe and confess His Divinity, and then declared, "Upon this Rock I will build My Church."<sup>1</sup> In other words Christ's method of proclaiming to the world the Truth, which is summed up in Himself, was the *building up of a society—a Church*—on the foundation of the Apostles.

Further light is thrown upon the intention of the Lord, by the express directions which He gave as to certain religious observances to be maintained by His followers. The two characteristic actions, the performance of which has ever been a mark of the religious life of Christians, and which are both directly traceable to the Lord's own command—viz. Baptism and the Holy Eucharist—are alike essentially *social and corporate* actions. Baptism was a ceremony not in itself new, but understood by the Jews of our Lord's time as symbolical of the inward moral purification necessary in order to the institution into the visible society of the Israel of God, of those who, whether by birth as Gentiles, or by reason of Levitical defilement, were outside it.<sup>2</sup> Similarly the rite of Baptism, as a Christian Sacrament, viewed on its lowest side only, is a badge or token of a Christian man's profession<sup>3</sup>—an outward token of his incorporation into the *visible company* of Christ's followers, a solemn swearing of allegiance to a new master.<sup>4</sup> Considered in this aspect Baptism is a mark of difference whereby Christian men, *as a visible body*, are outwardly discerned in the eyes of the world at large from those who are not Christians.<sup>5</sup> Again, of the Holy Eucharist, apart from all controversy, we may say that, if it is nothing else, it is at least this—it is by its very nature a corporate action; the pledge and security of the union of the members of a *visible society*. "We who are many are one bread, one body, for we

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 18.

<sup>2</sup> See EDERSHEIM, *Jesus the Messiah*, vol. i. p. 273.    <sup>3</sup> Article xxv.

<sup>4</sup> This aspect of Baptism underlies S. Paul's argument in 1 Cor. i. 13-17 and x. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Article xxvii.

all partake of the one bread.”<sup>1</sup> The two great Christian Sacraments, then, considered in their most obvious and elementary significance, entirely contradict the conception of the Church of Christ as merely the aggregate of pious souls throughout the world, known only to God, and not capable of being identified by man and therefore practically invisible. “Baptism, the Sacrament of initiation, cannot be administered to or by an invisible Church. The Holy Eucharist, the perpetually renewed Sacrament of membership, is equally inapplicable to an invisible Church.”<sup>2</sup>

But not only in the choice of corporate actions as Sacraments do we find evidence of our Lord’s purpose to found a visible society; we may trace indications of the same intention in other definite instructions which He gave as to the religious observances of His disciples. Thus Christ’s teaching on the subject of prayer will be found to involve the conception of the *social life* of His followers. In giving to the disciples a model form of prayer, it is not as isolated individuals that He bids them make their requests known unto God, but the words He puts into their mouth—“*Our Father*”<sup>3</sup>—imply a common brotherhood. By the pattern of prayer which He furnished the Lord would teach that in true normal Christian prayer the petitioner is, in spirit, not alone, but as a member of the brotherhood in Christ approaches the Father in Heaven, and that not for himself only, but on behalf of all. Our Lord’s instructions on the subject of prayer, however, go further than this; not only do they indicate that Christian prayer is normally *social*, but in a well-known passage, where the Lord is speaking of the constitution, powers, and privileges of the Church,<sup>4</sup> He clearly contemplates a local gathering of a *visible company* for the purpose of prayer in His Name. “I say unto you, That if two

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. x. 17.

<sup>2</sup> HUGH PRICE HUGHES in the *Contemporary Review*, March, 1897.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. vi. 9; S. Luke xi. 2.

<sup>4</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 17 *et seq.*, one of the only two places where the word *ἐκκλησία* occurs in the Gospels.

of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father Which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."<sup>1</sup>

The character and constitution of the new state of things which Jesus inaugurated is further indicated by His claim to be the Christ, the long-expected Messiah, sent into the world at the time appointed of the Father in fulfilment of the anticipations which the Jews, taught by Divinely inspired prophets, had been led to form. This Messianic claim which the Lord Himself taught the Apostles to recognise,<sup>2</sup> which He avowed when arraigned before the Council,<sup>3</sup> and which the Apostles in turn made on His behalf in their post-Pentecostal preaching,<sup>4</sup> involves the conception of the Kingdom of God. For the very title Messiah primarily signifies "anointed King," and the association of the Messiah with the expected Kingdom is illustrated by the fact that, in their greeting to Christ on His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the people are represented as exclaiming, "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord"—"Blessed be the coming Kingdom of our father David."<sup>5</sup> The proclamation of this Kingdom by the Baptist heralded the ministry of Jesus, and instruction upon this same Messianic Kingdom, the Kingdom of God—or of Heaven—forms the subject-matter of the greater part of our Lord's own teaching, its nature being fully illustrated in many parables. The prophetic conception of the Messianic Kingdom and our Lord's parabolic teaching concerning the Kingdom of Heaven alike imply a *visible and organised society*, a Kingdom in this world though not of it,<sup>6</sup> a *visible company or association*, in which every kind, both bad and good, is to be gathered.<sup>7</sup>

But it may be urged by some that the parables in the

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 16, 17.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xxvi. 63, 64 ; S. Mark xiv. 61, 62.

<sup>4</sup> Acts ii. 36 ; viii. 30-35 ; xiii. 22 *et seqq.*

<sup>5</sup> S. Matt. xxi. 9 ; S. Mark xi. 9, 10 ; S. Luke xix. 38.

<sup>6</sup> S. John xviii. 36.

<sup>7</sup> S. Matt. xiii. 47 ; xxii. 10.



Gospels illustrative of the Kingdom should have no place in our argument here, because the ideal Kingdom preached by Christ is not to be identified with the historical Christian Church. There has been manifested of late years amongst a certain school of theological writers, especially amongst some learned Nonconformists, a tendency to draw a distinction between the Church and the Kingdom, and to treat what is said in the Gospels of the Kingdom of Heaven as inapplicable to the Church. The distinction that is sought to be made is not easy to state shortly and clearly, but it may, perhaps not unfairly, be represented thus. It is said that the Kingdom is a perfectly spiritual society whose ideal will be realised only in the future, while the Church, on the other hand, is the unity of those who are already here on earth members of that Kingdom. If this distinction be sound, then it would seem that we have in the New Testament a distinction very closely, if not exactly, corresponding to the familiar one between a visible and an invisible Church which we meet with so frequently in a certain type of post-Reformation theology. But can any such distinction between Church and Kingdom be seriously and consistently maintained? A careful consideration will show us that it cannot. To begin with, we turn to those two places where alone the term *Church* (ἐκκλησία) is used by Christ Himself in the Gospels. In the first of these<sup>1</sup> the Lord says to S. Peter, after his great confession of faith, "Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church . . . and I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." Viewing the whole context, it would appear that Church and Kingdom are here used as alternative expressions embodying one and the same conception. Again, in the other passage where the word Church occurs in the mouth of Christ<sup>2</sup> the Lord is laying down the principle that, if an offender will not take heed to admonition given in private, the matter is to be referred to the Church. But here it is significant that in the immediate context, and in very direct connexion, there is recorded an illustrative

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 18, 19.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 17.

parable about the Kingdom,<sup>1</sup> so that in this passage the Church is not in any way to be distinguished from the Kingdom, but rather stands for the Kingdom as organised and as acting collectively for the discipline of an individual member. On passing from the Evangelical narratives to a perusal of the Epistles we find that the large space and prominent position occupied in the Gospels by the idea of the Kingdom of Heaven is now assumed by the conception of the Church. Not that we are able to make any contrast between the Kingdom as delineated by the Lord in the Gospels and the Church as depicted in the Apostolic Epistles, but the visible society of which the Apostles write, in the planting and organising of which their lives were spent and which they call the Church, is evidently that same new state of things inaugurated for man by Christ which He Himself most often spoke of as the Kingdom. For the Church of the Epistles is altogether as ethical a community as the Kingdom of the Gospels, so that any such contrast as that which represents the Kingdom of the New Testament as an ideal ethical community only, and the Church of the New Testament as an outwardly realised religious community, cannot be true to fact. The explanation of the use of the two terms Kingdom and Church is not to be sought indeed in any distinction of connotation, or in any doctrinal consideration, but the reason for the varying employment of the terms is rather an historical one. The word Kingdom was used by our Lord in His teaching as a suitable means of expressing to the immediate hearers, who were Jews, the idea of the Church. Christ's idea was an extension, and at the same time the perfection, of that exhibited by the Theocracy of the Old Covenant, and the Jews had been led to expect such extension<sup>2</sup> in the form of the Kingdom of Messiah. It is therefore natural and suitable that the conception should be set forth to them in the first instance in terms with which they were familiar and which they could appreciate and

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 21 *et seqq.*

<sup>2</sup> S. Mark xv. 43 ; S. Luke ii. 25, 26, 38 ; xxiv. 21.

understand. The direct cause of the adoption of the term Kingdom by our Lord is very probably to be found in the prophetic anticipations of the Book of Daniel,<sup>1</sup> and its consistent use by Him in delineating His Church may be paralleled by His adoption of the title Son of Man, from the same book,<sup>2</sup> as His usual designation for Himself. We conclude, then, that we are justified in understanding the parables of the Kingdom as illustrating the nature of the Church as a *visible society* because, on examination, it appears that in principle the Church and the Kingdom cannot be distinguished, so that attempts to draw and maintain such distinction are arbitrary and must tend to misconstruction and misapprehension.

We have next to consider the testimony of early documents as to how Christ's intention was in fact carried out in the world by the men He Himself had chosen and commissioned for the purpose. And first we turn to the inspired record of the beginnings of Christianity contained in the Acts of the Apostles. This book at the outset presents a picture of a company or society of men with more or less organisation, and with a regular ceremony of initiation to membership, and it is the work of the Apostles to plant, govern, and organise this society everywhere. Thus it was upon a visible company that the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost, and into the association of that visible company all those who accepted the Apostolic preaching were admitted by Baptism. Stedfast continuance in visible association with the Apostolic company is specially noted by the historian of those earliest days as one of the distinguishing marks of the first Christians.<sup>3</sup> Those who accepted the Gospel are represented as a visible company in conscious fellowship with one another, and recognised as followers of Jesus by outsiders. The number of those who belonged to the Christian society could be counted,<sup>4</sup> and no one is regarded as a member of the Church, as within the sphere of the operation of the Holy Spirit poured forth

<sup>1</sup> Dan. ii. 44 ; vii. 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Dan. vii. 13, 14.

<sup>3</sup> Acts ii. 42.

<sup>4</sup> Acts i. 15 ; ii. 41 ; iv. 4.

by the ascended Christ, or as in the way of salvation,<sup>1</sup> who is not admitted by Baptism into the visible fellowship of the Apostles. The example of the centurion Cornelius may be especially referred to by way of illustration. While as yet he had not heard the preaching of the Gospel, an angel of God assured him "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God,"<sup>2</sup> and S. Peter quotes his particular case in proof of the principle that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him."<sup>3</sup> Yet the sacred narrative represents God Himself as making special revelations from heaven in order that this same Cornelius may, by Baptism, be joined to the visible society and fellowship of the Apostles. We read, "The angel stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter, who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved."<sup>4</sup> The possibility, then, of unattached Christians is evidently not contemplated in the Acts, and in this sense the well-known saying is true, *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. The Divinely ordained way of salvation is through the Church—through admission to fellowship in the visible Apostolic society. "The Lord added to the Church daily those that were being saved,"<sup>5</sup> so the historian states the matter, and one of the Twelve, S. John, no less clearly gives expression to the same truth of salvation through the visible Church when he says, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may also have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."<sup>6</sup>

When, in investigating the conception of the Church in the earliest days of Christianity, we pass from the Acts to the Pauline Epistles, we come to deal with documents of a different character and scope. The Acts furnishes a number of representative speeches and actions to illustrate the spread of the Church by the Apostles in obedience to the Lord's command, and it is, in the main, a record of facts and results.

<sup>1</sup> σωζόμενος. See Acts ii. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xi. 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Acts. x. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Acts ii. 47.

<sup>3</sup> Acts x. 34, 35.

<sup>6</sup> 1 S. John i. 3.

S. Paul's letters, on the other hand, give an insight into the principles and methods which led to those same results. It is also to be remembered that the Epistles of the New Testament are incidental letters, called forth by particular circumstances, and written to meet special requirements with no evidential purpose, and with no intention of proving fundamental and generally accepted points. This consideration renders their testimony to the conception of the Church all the more valuable and trustworthy. We find in them that Christians, as incidentally represented, are a *visible body* clearly marked off from the world outside. S. Paul is able to draw an emphatic distinction between "those within" and "those without." "What have I to do," he writes, "to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth."<sup>1</sup> The Christians in any given place are a body of men known to one another, for the Apostle can bid his readers "greet all the brethren with an holy kiss."<sup>2</sup> Christians as such, in the writings of S. Paul, are members of the Christian Society, with mutual privileges, duties and responsibilities as brethren or as members of the one Body; and the individual Christian is a member of an organised local Church. The local Church is not all-sufficient in itself and independent, but is a local representation of the one Society, responsible to the Apostle as a general officer, and governed by the general traditions.<sup>3</sup> All the Churches,<sup>4</sup> in fact, constitute together the Church—one great society with common institutions and organisation—a society which already has its traditions both of faith and practice,<sup>5</sup> which an Apostle has the power to require obedience to on the part of the members,<sup>6</sup> and wherein the Apostle also has the right (to be exercised in conjunction with the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. v. 12, 13. See the whole context, and cf. xiv. 23.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. v. 26.

<sup>3</sup> See especially 1 Cor. vii. 17; xi. 16; xiv. 33.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 17; Rom. xvi. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Of faith, 1 Cor. xv. 3; of practice, 1 Cor. xi. 16, 23.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 15; iii. 6; 1 Cor. xi. 2.

society as a whole<sup>1</sup>) of excommunicating unworthy members and of re-admitting them to fellowship upon repentance.<sup>2</sup> Before leaving this part of our argument, we may also pause to note that the outward visibility of the Church is implied in some of those well-known figures which S. Paul employs to set out the dignity and privileges of the community, and to illustrate the mutual relations of its members, such as when he speaks of the Church under the image of a Temple of God,<sup>3</sup> or teaches that it is the Body of Christ.<sup>4</sup>

While the testimony of the New Testament thus makes it plain that the Church was everywhere planted and organised by the Apostles as a visible society, historical evidence likewise shows that, in the view of the world outside and of opponents, Christians, as such, were considered members of a corporation or visible society. It was as a secret society with a close corporate life, with badges of fellowship by which the members might be known, and accused of practising unhallowed rites in its assemblies, that Christianity came to the notice of the heathen world as a force to be reckoned with and as an object of suspicion. In the *Apology of Aristides*<sup>5</sup> the argument proceeds throughout on the hypothesis that Christians are a race or people who can be identified individually and who possess certain characteristics as a society. "This people is a new people and there is something Divine mingled with it"<sup>6</sup> writes the Apologist; and again, "Truly blessed is the race of Christians more than all men that are upon the face of the earth."<sup>7</sup> All that is said of the Christians by Aristides implies that they can be outwardly identified and that they identify one another as members of the Christian society; e.g. "but when one of their poor passes away from

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. v. 4; 2 Cor. ii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Thess. iii. 14; 1 Cor. v. 3-13; 2 Cor. ii. 5-10; 1 Tim. i. 20.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Eph. ii. 20-22.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. xii. 5; Eph. i. 23; v. 30; Col. i. 18, 24.

<sup>5</sup> A defence of Christianity addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius by Aristides, a philosopher of Athens, 120-140 A.D.

<sup>6</sup> *Apol. Aristides*, cap. xvi.

<sup>7</sup> *Apol. Aristides*, cap. xvii.



the world and any of them sees him, then he provides for his burial according to his ability; and if they hear that any of their number is imprisoned or oppressed for the name of their Messiah, all of them provide for his needs, and if it is possible that he may be delivered they deliver him . . . and if any righteous person of their number passes away from the world they rejoice and give thanks to God . . . and if again they see that one of their number has died in his iniquity, or in his sins, over this one they weep bitterly and sigh.”<sup>1</sup> In the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix,<sup>2</sup> again, we find an exceedingly vivid description of the Christians as they appeared to the heathen world around them; they were looked upon as “men of unlawful and desperate faction,” as people guilty of the grossest immorality in their assemblies by night, and partaking of unhallowed repasts;<sup>3</sup> a society whose members recognised one another by secret signs or marks and who used “promiscuously the names of brother and sister.”<sup>4</sup> The very fact that such accusations were made is in itself proof conclusive that in those days to be a Christian involved *fellowship in a visible society* with its conditions and tokens of membership, its meetings and its rites performed by the members in common.

Before we pass from our historical argument on this subject it may be well to show by a few specimen quotations that the conception of the Church as a visible society, which is, as we have seen, the sole Scriptural conception, is also the one we meet with in the writings of the Fathers, both in East and West. We will arrange in chronological order some of the most striking passages which illustrate the Patristic doctrine of the Church as a visible society. We take first the Epistle of S. Clement of Rome to the Corinthians. Throughout the whole letter the outward unity of the Church as an organised

<sup>1</sup> *Apol. Aristides*, cap. xv.

<sup>2</sup> An apologetic dialogue concerning the date of which there is considerable diversity of opinion, some placing it about 180, others about 230 A.D.

<sup>3</sup> MINUCIUS FELIX, *Oct.*, cap. viii.    <sup>4</sup> MINUCIUS FELIX, *Oct.*, cap. ix.



society is brought prominently forward, and the orderly organisation of the Christian community under the Apostles and their immediate successors is specially alluded to. Thus the Church is compared to the imperial army and to the human body. "Let us mark the soldiers that are enlisted under our rulers, how exactly, how readily, how submissively, they execute the orders given them. All are not prefects, nor rulers of thousands, nor rulers of hundreds, nor rulers of fifties, and so forth; but each man in his own rank executeth the orders given by the king and the governors. The great without the small cannot exist, neither the small without the great. There is a certain mixture in all things, and therein is utility. Let us take our body as an example. The head without the feet is nothing; so likewise the feet without the head are nothing: even the smallest limbs of our body are necessary and useful for the whole body: but all the members conspire and unite in subjection, that the whole body may be saved. So in our case let the whole body be saved in Christ Jesus."<sup>1</sup> Again, with reference to the steps taken by the Apostles for the organisation of the Church as a visible society, S. Clement writes: "So preaching everywhere in country and town, they appointed their first-fruits, when they had proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons unto them that should believe."<sup>2</sup> "And our Apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife over the name of the bishop's office. For this cause therefore, having received complete foreknowledge, they appointed the aforesaid persons and afterwards they provided a continuance, that if these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed to their ministration."<sup>3</sup>

The Epistles of S. Ignatius, the martyr-bishop of Antioch, are full of the conception of the Church as a visible communion with regular officers, of whom the bishop is chief and the great centre of union. Let two or three quotations suffice:

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. xxxvii. and xxxviii.

<sup>2</sup> I Cor. xlii.

<sup>3</sup> I Cor. xlv.

(a) "If any one be not within the altar he lacketh the Bread of God." <sup>1</sup>

Here the altar is put by the writer for the outward unity of the Church, because the Sacrament of the altar is the great token and pledge of the Church's unity; hence the meaning of the passage is that he lacks that Divine sustenance and support which is the privilege of the Christian who is not, by participation in the Sacrament, within the outward unity of the visible Church.

(b) "As many as are of God and of Jesus Christ, they are with the Bishop; and as many as shall repent and enter into the unity of the Church, these also shall be of God, that they may be living after Jesus Christ." <sup>2</sup>

(c) "When ye are obedient to the Bishop as to Jesus Christ, it is evident to me that ye are living not after men, but after Jesus Christ. . . . It is therefore necessary, even as your wont is, that ye should do nothing without the Bishop; but be ye obedient also to the presbytery, as to the Apostles of Jesus Christ our hope; for if we live in Him we shall also be found in Him." <sup>3</sup>

In the *Shepherd* of Hermas the Divine ideal of the Church, on account of which the world was made,<sup>4</sup> is represented as realised in the visible tower, built upon the Rock, which is Christ,<sup>5</sup> and those who cleave not to the saints of God, but isolate themselves, are said to lose their souls.<sup>6</sup>

Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons in the West, who had been himself brought up in the East, thus writes: "In the Church God has placed Apostles, prophets, teachers, and the whole operation of the Spirit, and all who do not run to the Church are not partakers of Him, but deprive themselves of life. . . . For where the Church is there is the Spirit of God, and where the Spirit of God is there is the Church and all grace."<sup>7</sup>

S. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, speaks very strongly and emphatically: "Whoever he may be, and whatsoever sort

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Philad. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Trall. ii.

<sup>4</sup> Vis. ii. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Vis. iii. 3; Sim. ix.

<sup>6</sup> Sim. ix. 26.

<sup>7</sup> *Adv. Hær.* III. xxiv. 1.

of man he may be, he is not a Christian who is not in the Church of Christ.”<sup>1</sup> And again, “Where, and of what mother, or to what father, is he born who is not a son of the Church? No one can have God as his father who has not the Church for his mother.”<sup>2</sup>

In the conception of the great Bishop of Hippo the Church is not merely a Divine idea, but a visible polity, a *civitas*, with its recognised constitution, its discipline and its officers, just as, on the other hand, the *civitas* of this world, embodied in the Roman Empire, was an actual polity.<sup>3</sup> One or two short and unmistakable passages from the writings of the same Father may be quoted: “There is no security for the preservation of unity except from the promises of Christ to His Church, which being placed on a mountain, as it was said, cannot be hidden, and therefore it is necessary that this Church should be known to all parts of the world.”<sup>4</sup> And again he writes: “Hence it is that the true Church cannot be hidden to anyone; and hence that which He saith in the Gospel, a city set on a hill cannot be hid.”<sup>5</sup>

So far we have discussed the nature of the Church historically. We have examined the documents at our disposal and have found expressed in the Gospels Christ’s intention to propagate His Revelation in the world and to bestow His gifts of grace on man through the agency of a visible society. We have seen, further, that the men whom Christ Himself trained and sent forth under the guidance of His Spirit did in fact establish everywhere such a visible society, and claimed to bring men within the sphere of operation of Divine grace by administering the rite of admission into this society. This same doctrine of salvation through incorporation into the visible fellowship of the Church we have traced as consistently taught in the writings of the early Fathers. We have also called to mind that it was not as an abstract philosophy, nor

<sup>1</sup> Ep. lv. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. lxxiv. 7.

<sup>3</sup> This is the thought underlying the whole argument of S. Augustine’s great work, *De Civitate Dei*. Cf. CUNNINGHAM’S *St. Austin*, p. 116.

<sup>4</sup> Contr. Ep. Parmen. III. v. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Contr. Petil. II. xxxii. 9.

in the shape of a formulated code, but as represented by a well-defined society that the Christian Religion forced itself upon the notice, and incurred the suspicion of the heathen.

We have now to pursue our argument further and upon different lines. It will be necessary for us to go back to first principles, to consider how and why it is that a Divine Revelation and spiritual graces are conveyed to man through material media, and that spiritual religion is embodied in outward and visible form. The convenient antithesis between body and spirit is one that is very often made use of, especially in theological discussions, the outward and visible being set in opposition to, and contrasted with, the inward and spiritual. But though convenient the antithesis is at bottom false, and when pressed may lead to serious misconception. The antithesis is false because body, rightly understood, implies spirit. For spirit, as we know it (and we can only speak and treat of things as we find them, not as we imagine they should be), only acts and manifests itself through material *media*—in other words, through body; and, on the other hand, all such bodily actions as are not true to the indwelling spirit within are essentially failures. Body, therefore, or outward material form in the universe as God has constituted it, is not an unfortunate condescension, but the necessary vehicle of spirit, and as such rises to the dignity of that which it expresses, when it expresses it truly. Similarly, the association of spiritual religion with outward and visible form is not to be viewed as a regrettable, though necessary, accommodation to man's present unsatisfactory condition. Any such supposition would seem to be akin to a Manichæan doctrine as to matter, and it is only an unreal and negative spirituality that cannot see the dignity and the spiritual capacity of material things.

That spiritual religion is not free from outward form will be apparent in the first place from a consideration of what is called natural religion. In natural religion man is never independent of the material creation; on the contrary, such spiritual religion and knowledge of the Deity as he may be able to attain can only be arrived at through the teaching

derived from a consideration of the visible works of God in nature. It is, as S. Paul expressly says, "through the things that are made" that the invisible attributes of God, even His everlasting power and divinity are perceived.<sup>1</sup> The witness to Himself that God has given lies in the benefits that accrue to man through the outward and visible operations of nature, the rain and fruitful seasons which God provides, filling man's heart with food and gladness.<sup>2</sup> It is thus inherently impossible that natural religion can be independent of outward material form.

On leaving the subject of natural religion and coming to consider revealed religion we experience the working of the same principle that spiritual religion is bound up with outward form. The religion of the Old Covenant centred in a Law of commandments contained in ordinances.<sup>3</sup> But the Jewish religion was no mere empty letter void of spirit. It was the Divinely chosen instrument for the training of the human race in the earlier stage of its moral and spiritual development.<sup>4</sup> Without the organised polity of the Hebrew nation, and without the hierarchy and sacrificial system of the Hebrew Church, where could there have been preserved in the world, or how handed on, the testimony to the great spiritual truth of the unity of God, the conception of His essential righteousness and His demand of a corresponding righteousness from man? It is no doubt true that Judaism became to a large extent a formal system; yet at the same time the very performance of the forms, in which so many wrongly rested, kept alive the testimony to the spirit for faithful men, and while the forms survived, however perfunctorily gone through, there was always a chance of the revival of the spirit. Indeed, without the outward polity and forms of Judaism, how could a people have been spiritually prepared for the Lord? How could there have been a faithful spiritual remnant to form the nucleus of Christ's Catholic Church?

Then, again, if we consider the Revelation in the Bible, it

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xiv. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. ii. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. iii. 24; iv. i. *et seq.*

is obvious that it is no more free from external form than is the Revelation of God through the visible works of nature. The Bible is the Word of God to the soul of man. True. But it is not a direct message. It came to those to whom the various books of Scripture were first addressed through the medium of human language and through the visible form of human writing. Indeed, the writing of a book involves the conception of the conveyance of an inward message through an outward form. It is scarcely necessary, perhaps, to add that to us who live so long after the books of the Bible were actually written the revelation is even less direct and immediate; we have to take into account also the transmission of the text through the work of copyists and translators, and the application of what is read through exposition.

Again in the final Revelation of God to man, to which the revelations in nature and through the Mosaic dispensation pointed forward, and for which they prepared the way, we find the crowning example of the great principle that spirit is not independent of outward form. It was when the Word became flesh and dwelt among them that men beheld the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.<sup>1</sup> When God gave to the world the full Revelation of Himself it was not by means of an overwhelming manifestation direct to man's spirit which none could resist or gainsay, but through the gradual dawning of grace and truth in a perfect human life; it was not by a subjective communication from the Divine Spirit direct to the spirit of man, but through an objective manifestation of the moral image of God in the visible life of Jesus of Nazareth. This objective manifestation, too, was one which might be ignored or misunderstood, just as, in natural religion, for some the material veil of created things may serve to conceal God rather than to reveal Him, and just as the written letter of Scripture may by some be misinterpreted. Yet the life of the Christ, to those who were subjectively prepared, was a very manifestation of the Deity, and gave power to live a Divine life—"to as many as received

<sup>1</sup> S. John i. 14.



Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God.”<sup>1</sup> The life of Jesus Christ was the life of a true man amongst men, a visible outward human life. Men knew and recognised Him as the prophet of Galilee,<sup>2</sup> the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses and of Juda and Simon;<sup>3</sup> yet it is none the less true that they who saw Him saw the Father,<sup>4</sup> those who heard Him heard the words of the Father,<sup>5</sup> the whole of His perfect life was a manifestation of the Father, with Whom He is eternally and essentially one.<sup>6</sup>

The Revelation of the Father given in the Incarnation thus stands as the crowning example of the great principle which we find everywhere at work in the world as we know it, and which marks all God’s dealings with mankind, viz. the law that spirit is not independent of outward and visible form. This being so, it follows that the Christian Dispensation, which depends upon and is an extension of the benefits of the Incarnation, will exhibit the operation of the same great principle. If the Church depends upon the Incarnation and is its application to the world, then it is necessary not merely that it should hold Divine Truth, as the Divine Person of Christ was Himself the Truth,<sup>7</sup> but, just as it was necessary for the Word of God to take our material nature and become flesh in order to reveal to man that Truth which He Himself is, so too must it be also necessary that the Church should have a body—an outward and visible organisation—wherewith to reach mankind and convey to them the grace and truth she holds. Thus the analogy of Christ’s mystical body is to be sought in His natural body; as the Lord Jesus Christ is<sup>8</sup> material and spiritual,<sup>9</sup> so too the Church, which is His Body, is a unity both material and spiritual.<sup>10</sup>

As the Church must be visible, so too it follows from the

<sup>1</sup> S. John i. 12.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xxi. 11; S. John vii. 40, 41.

<sup>3</sup> S. Mark vi. 3.

<sup>4</sup> S. John xii. 45; xiv. 9.

<sup>5</sup> S. John vii. 16; viii. 28; xiv. 24.

<sup>6</sup> S. John x. 30.

<sup>7</sup> S. John xiv. 6.

<sup>8</sup> *Is*, not *was*, because the humanity was not laid aside at the Ascension.

<sup>9</sup> IGNATIUS, *Ep. to Ephesians*, vii.

<sup>10</sup> IGNATIUS, *Ep. to Magnesians*, xiii.



very constitution of human nature that it must also take the form of a *society*, and one of the strongest possible objections to a purely subjective spiritual religion is that it leaves out of account the social side of man's being. It is very significant that at man's creation the Creator Himself is, in the narrative of Genesis, represented as declaring when surveying His handiwork, "It is not good for man to be alone."<sup>1</sup> We are not, in fact, isolated individuals, either in our material, intellectual, or spiritual life, and any attempt to act as such is a downgrade movement, foredoomed to failure, bound to issue in the distortion of man's conceptions, the cramping of his powers, the degeneration instead of the development of his individual self. We need not pause to prove at length that our natural life, both for its inception at birth and for its subsequent growth and healthy maintenance, is dependent on the action of our fellows, just as also our mental powers would become atrophied without the formal training we receive from others during the school-days of youth, or without the exercise and discipline arising from intercourse with other minds in maturer years. The same law, we may be sure, holds good also of the spirit of man, which is the highest part of his nature. It is only in society that the individual man, viewed either on his lower or his higher side, considered as an animal or as a spiritual being, can possibly attain his fullest and highest development. Therefore if the Church of God is to be a fit centre and training-school of spiritual life for man it necessarily follows that it must take the form of a visible *society*.

The expression *invisible Church* dates from the sixteenth century, though the idea conveyed by it occurs earlier. It presupposes a quite un-Scriptural and un-Primitive contrast between the true Church, as consisting of subjectively religious persons, or the elect of God, whose members can be known to God only, since it is He alone Who can read the heart of man, and the visible body of outwardly professing Christians. The teaching of this doctrine that the true Church is invisible

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ii. 18.

was especially characteristic of the Swiss, or Calvinistic, school of Reformers in the sixteenth century, and it found expression in their leading Confessions of Faith. In the *Scotch Confession* (1560) the Article on the Church contains this statement: "We believe that . . . unto the end of the world there will be one Church, *i.e.* a society and multitude of men elected by God. . . . *This Church is invisible*, known to God alone, Who alone knows whom He has chosen."<sup>1</sup> Similarly in the *Second Helvetic Confession* (1562) we read: "Whence also *the Church may be called invisible*, not because men are invisible of whom the Church is made up, but because being hidden from our eyes and known to God alone, it often escapes man's judgment."<sup>2</sup> Calvin himself, in his great work the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, contrasts the invisible Church, "which is really such in the sight of God," with "the whole multitude dispersed over all the world, who profess to worship one God and Jesus Christ, who are initiated into His faith by Baptism, who testify their unity in true doctrine and charity by a participation of the Sacred Supper, who consent to the Word of the Lord, and preserve the ministry which Christ has instituted for the purpose of preaching it." In this visible Church, he adds, "are included many hypocrites who have nothing of Christ's but the name and appearance."<sup>3</sup> The outcome of the Reformer's teaching is the conclusion that while some, being predestined to life, are members of the true and invisible Church, though they may never have been members of the visible Church; others, on the other hand, though they may outwardly conform to the visible Church and receive its Sacraments, have never, since they are predestined to reprobation, in reality received Divine grace, and are not members of the true Church at all. At the base of such conception of the Church is the Puritan desire to eliminate from the Church on earth every appearance of evil, to root out the tares from the field, and this type of teaching has been inherited by the bulk of English separatists, and finds expression in their standards of doctrine.

<sup>1</sup> Art. xvi.<sup>2</sup> Art. xvii.<sup>3</sup> CALVIN'S *Institutes*, IV. i. 7.

Thus, according to the *Westminster Confession*, the Presbyterian standard (1646), "The Catholic or universal Church, *which is invisible*, consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof."<sup>1</sup> So also the *Second Baptist Confession* (1667) states: "The Catholic or universal Church, *which may be called invisible*, consists of the whole number of the elect."<sup>2</sup> In the opinion of those who hold to this doctrine, the true Church is simply the total number of elect or subjectively religious persons, and must therefore be an invisible, unrecognisable, and abstract thing. If our parallel between Christ's Body mystical and His natural Body holds good, such teaching would seem to be a docetic doctrine of the Church, for it represents the Church (as the Docetæ taught of our Lord Himself) as having no true body at all, since the visible Church is not co-extensive with the true Church, and for some of its members at least is a counterfeit and a sham.

We have seen that the doctrine that the true Church of God is invisible is one which is unknown to Scripture and the Primitive Church, and that the contrast between a visible and an invisible Church leads to confusion; but it is when we come to consider the doctrine concerning the Church from a practical point of view that the conception of an invisible Church hopelessly breaks down. For suppose we take the visible Church as we find it in the world with its message from God in the preaching of the Word, and with its ordinances and promises received from God—suppose, too, that we take the lowest view of the Sacramental ordinances administered in God's Name, even then at least they are badges and tokens of profession by which Christians are distinguished from non-Christians.<sup>3</sup> But if this be so, then it must needs be that Christ's followers are outwardly marked off from others, and that acceptance of Christ involves admission to a visible company or brotherhood. But, not to press this line of argument, suppose we were to grant

<sup>1</sup> xxv. I.<sup>2</sup> Section xxvi.<sup>3</sup> Art. xxvii.

the distinction that is made by some between a visible and an invisible Church, even then it is none the less clear that it is to the *Visible Church* that God has committed His saving Revelation; it is to the visible Church that the ministry of preaching and the administration of the means of grace are entrusted, so that the visible Church is the means of the invisible. It is the visible, not the invisible, Church which is a power on the side of God and righteousness in an evil world, and the ark of salvation for sinful men. Further, the invisible Church is found, when we try to handle it and use it, to be an altogether unpractical conception; it is like an instrument which cannot be used without being broken; for as soon as we indicate that such an one is a member of the true Church, we at once make that Church visible. But, in fact, the distinction between visible and invisible cannot thus be made. It is not made, we repeat, in Scripture, and to attempt to make it is to be wise above that which is written. The only sense in which any distinction between visible and invisible holds good as regards the Church is when we speak of the Church militant here in earth as visible, in contrast to that far larger portion of the Church of God whose members are in the waiting state beyond the grave, and who are at present invisible to us.

## CHAPTER III

### THE NOTES OF THE CHURCH

CONSIDERED as a Divine Society, as the sphere of the Holy Spirit's manifold operation for the salvation of mankind and the restoration of all things, the Church will be found to possess a certain nature or inner character. This character is summed up and expressed in the four attributes mentioned in the ancient Creeds of Christendom, wherein we profess our faith in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. There are thus four *Essential Notes* of the Church, *i.e.* four characteristics which indicate the *essence or nature of the Church as a Divine Society*, and since these are marks of the Church as a Divine Institution, God's own chosen possession and instrument, it will appear that they correspond to Divine attributes.

The Church of God is *One* because God Himself is One. There is in the Eternal Godhead a perfect unity of Being, as Christ plainly indicated when He said, "I and My Father are One."<sup>1</sup> This Essential Unity of the Godhead is, moreover, exhibited in operation through the perfect moral unity of the Three Persons in the Blessed Trinity. "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing; for what things soever He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner."<sup>2</sup> Hence of His teaching our Lord affirms, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me,"<sup>3</sup> and again He asks, "Believest Thou not that I am

<sup>1</sup> S. John x. 30, where note particularly the significance of the neuter *ἐν*—one essence—not one person (masculine).

<sup>2</sup> S. John v. 19.

<sup>3</sup> S. John vii. 16; cf. viii. 28.

in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I say unto you I speak not from Myself; but the Father abiding in Me doeth His works.”<sup>1</sup> Further, with reference to the Third Person in the Trinity it was promised, “He shall guide you into all the truth: for He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak: . . . He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I that He taketh of Mine, and shall declare it unto you.”<sup>2</sup> Seeing then that there is One God and One Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ,<sup>3</sup> One Shepherd of the flock, One Head of the Body, One Spirit, One Faith, One Salvation, it follows that there is One Church. As a Divine Society the Church has an essential unity. Owing to the presence of sin a moral unity manifested in united action is not yet fully attained by the members of the Church, yet by the grace of God they are being educated up to it, and by virtue of their membership and privileges in the One Church, faithfully used, they are destined to attain to it. This, as S. Paul tells us, is the end of the building up of the Body of Christ—“till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”<sup>4</sup>

The Church of God is *Holy* because she is the peculiar possession of God, the Holy One. All that God claims as His own is holy, consecrated to His service. Thus we find in Scripture that the place God chooses to put His Name there becomes His Holy Mountain; the times He appoints for special religious observance are, in virtue of that appointment, holy days and seasons; the persons He sets apart to draw near to Himself in the priestly office are a holy priesthood; and the nation whom He chooses for His peculiar people is by reason of the Divine claim a holy nation. Nor is *Holy* in such case

<sup>1</sup> S. John xiv. 10.

<sup>2</sup> S. John xvi. 13-15.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. iv. 13.



merely a title expressing reverence for what God has thus set apart, but when God gives a call He intends that man should respond and live up to it. Israel's call to be the people of God, therefore, involved a call to actual holiness of life, "Ye shall be holy, for I am Holy."<sup>1</sup> So also the Christian Church—as an "elect race" is "a royal priesthood, a holy nation,"<sup>2</sup> in which all the members are called to active holiness—"like as He which called you is Holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living."<sup>3</sup> Not yet, indeed, is this holiness fully realised, men do not live up to their calling as they should; nevertheless it remains true that in the Church they are being trained to it. Resting upon the Apostolic foundation, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner-stone, they are even now being fitly framed together, they are *growing into an holy temple* in the Lord,<sup>4</sup> and shall at last be presented faultless before the presence of God.<sup>5</sup>

The Church is *Catholic* because God is all in all, and in Him Whom the Church reveals and with Whom in the Church we are brought into union, is the perfect satisfaction of all human desires and aspirations. Human nature was created in the image of God, with capacities which nothing short of communion with Him can ever really satisfy. The Psalmist was giving expression to the yearning of all mankind when he cried, "My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the Living God,"<sup>6</sup> and men of all races and in all ages have been naturally feeling after God if haply they might find Him.<sup>7</sup> "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, Which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."<sup>8</sup> The Incarnate Son, being the Image of the invisible God,<sup>9</sup> has revealed to man the Father. Those who saw Him saw the Father.<sup>10</sup> Those who hearkened to Him heard the words of the Father.<sup>11</sup> The whole of His perfect life was a manifesta-

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xi. 45; xx. 7.

<sup>2</sup> 1 S. Peter ii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> 1 S. Peter i. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. ii. 20, 21.

<sup>5</sup> S. Jude 24.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. xlii. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Acts xvii. 27.

<sup>8</sup> S. John i. 18.

<sup>9</sup> Col. i. 15.

<sup>10</sup> S. John xii. 45; xiv. 9.

<sup>11</sup> S. John vii. 16; viii. 28; xiv. 24.



tion of the Father,<sup>1</sup> with Whom He is One.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, since the Church in preaching the Gospel of the Incarnation declares to men the whole counsel of God;<sup>3</sup> since she is entrusted with and proclaims the full Revelation of the Father in the Incarnate Son; since her members have fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ,<sup>4</sup>—therefore her message appeals to all mankind and satisfies the deep longings of man as man, so that she, by reason of the grace and truth she bears, is all-embracing, fitted and destined to be a Catholic, a Universal, Church.

The Church is *Apostolic* because, as a Divine institution, her activity is ruled by the same great principle upon which God Himself acts. This is the principle of *Mission*. Alike in nature and in grace God the Father works through the Mission or *sending forth from Himself* (i.e. the *Apostleship*) of the Eternal Son. Thus we are taught in Scripture that it was by the agency of the Eternal Word that all things were made, and without His quickening Presence, apart from Him, was not even one thing made,<sup>5</sup> for in Him all things were created, and in Him all things hold together.<sup>6</sup> Again, it was by the sending forth of the same Word, or Son, of God to take our human nature<sup>7</sup> that the dispensation of grace was inaugurated and power given to men to become the sons of God.<sup>8</sup> When the fulness of the time came God sent forth (ἐξαπέστειλεν) His Son, born of a woman, that we might receive the adoption of sons.<sup>9</sup> The Eternal Son is thus the *Apostle*<sup>10</sup> as well of our Creation as of our Redemption. This Mission from within the Blessed Trinity, which is the ground of the Christian dispensation, is Divinely intended to be perpetuated therein, for in commissioning His Apostles our Lord said, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you,"<sup>11</sup> thereby handing on to them the same Mission which He Himself had received from the Father, and, by implication, the same power to transmit it

<sup>1</sup> S. John xvii. 6.

<sup>4</sup> 1 S. John i. 3.

<sup>7</sup> S. John i. 14.

<sup>10</sup> Heb. iii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> S. John x. 30.

<sup>5</sup> S. John i. 3.

<sup>8</sup> S. John i. 12.

<sup>11</sup> S. John xx. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xx. 27.

<sup>6</sup> Col. i. 16, 17.

<sup>9</sup> Gal. iv. 4, 5.

to others. The very Mission of the Son of God Himself, with all its saving gifts of grace and truth,<sup>1</sup> is thus continued for mankind in the Ministry of the Apostles whom He chose and sent, and of those whom they in turn commissioned to succeed them. When, therefore, we call the Church Apostolic we mean to indicate that therein and thereby, *through a perpetual Apostleship instituted by the Lord and based upon His own Apostleship*, the works which He Himself wrought for our redemption and sanctification are continued even to the end of the world.<sup>2</sup>

When we view the Church rather on its human side as a Visible Society wherein Divine Grace is dispensed and the work of Christ is continued for man through a visible organisation, through human instrumentality and by outward means, we find that there are three great characteristics by which it may be recognised and known. The Church, *qua Institution*, in concrete manifestation has these three Notes:—

1. *The Preaching of the Pure Word of God.*—It must always be the function of the Church to preserve, to proclaim, and to hand on the Revelation of the Truth which Christ came to bring, and which is summed up in Himself. She exists as an Institution that she may extend to all mankind the knowledge of the One True God and of His Son Jesus Christ, wherein consists man's eternal life.<sup>3</sup>

2. *The due ministration of the Sacraments in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.*—As the Son of God came into the world not only to reveal the Truth, but also to bestow Grace that men might live up to it, so it is characteristic of the Church He founded to carry on His work, not only that she proclaims the Truth, but also that she bestows His Grace upon men by faithfully ministering according to His ordinance those Sacramental means of grace which He Himself instituted and committed to her.

3. *The right administration of Discipline.*—But Christ did not simply leave His Truth and Grace in the world for men to

<sup>1</sup> S. John i. 14.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

<sup>3</sup> S. John xvii. 3.

make what they could of them. He gave them in trust to His chosen and trained company of disciples, He committed them to the organised fellowship of the Apostles; and since it is, of course, intended that God's Truth and Grace should have a bearing, and exercise their transforming influence, upon practical human life in the world, due disciplinary powers, such as are necessary to the healthy existence and working of the Church as an Institution working for men and through men, were accordingly conferred by the Lord upon those whom He commissioned.<sup>1</sup> It is necessary, therefore, that the Church should have this third Note of orderly organisation as a safeguard of the Truth and Grace entrusted to it, carrying with it due disciplinary regulation of practical life.

These three characteristics detailed above are laid down in Anglican Formularies as Notes of the true Church of Christ. Thus in the Homilies we read: "The true Church is an universal congregation or fellowship of God's elect people, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner-stone. And it hath always three notes or marks, whereby it is known; pure and sound doctrine, the Sacraments ministered according to Christ's holy institution, and the right use of ecclesiastical discipline."<sup>2</sup> This last note is explained in the context to mean "the authority of the keys" which "Christ ordained to excommunicate notorious sinners, and to absolve them that are truly penitent." It is also added that "this description of the Church is agreeable both to the Scriptures of God, and also to the doctrine of the ancient fathers, so that none may justly find fault therewith." In the Ordinal, again, the same three Notes of the Church are referred to when the Bishop asks each one who is to be ordained Priest: "Will you then give your faithful diligence also so to minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church hath received the same?" These three Notes of the Church are also given in the

<sup>1</sup> S. John xx. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Homily for Whitsunday*, Part II., pp. 494, 495, ed. S.P.C.K.

English Eleven Articles of 1559,<sup>1</sup> and in the Confessions of the Swiss School of Reformers generally, which laid special emphasis on Discipline—*e.g.* in the First Helvetic Confession (1536),<sup>2</sup> the Scotch Confession (1560),<sup>3</sup> and the Belgic Confession (1561).<sup>4</sup> The Confessions of the Lutheran Reformers, as a rule, make express mention of the first two only of the three notes above given, the famous Augsburg Confession (1530), for example, states that “the Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is duly taught, and the Sacraments duly administered,”<sup>5</sup> and similar definitions with precise statement of only these two notes of the Church occur in the Tetrapolitan (1530),<sup>6</sup> Bohemian (1532),<sup>7</sup> and Saxon (1551)<sup>8</sup> Confessions. So in the nineteenth of our Thirty-nine Articles, which dates from as far back as 1552, and shows traces of Lutheran influence, the Visible Church of Christ is defined as “a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered, according to Christ’s ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.” Though only two Notes of the Church are here particularly stated, it appears, of course, upon reflection that the preaching of the

<sup>1</sup> “I do acknowledge also that Church to be the spouse of Christ, wherein the Word of God is truly taught, the Sacraments orderly ministered according to Christ’s institution, and the authority of the keys duly used.”—Art. iii. of *Eleven Articles*.

<sup>2</sup> “This Church . . . is perceived and known by certain external rites, instituted by Christ Himself, and by the Word of God, as by a public and lawful discipline.”—*First Helvetic Confession*, Art. xv.

<sup>3</sup> “The Notes, therefore, of the true Church of God we believe, confess, and profess to be:—First, and before all things, the true preaching of the Word of God. . . . Secondly, the due administration of the Sacraments of Jesus Christ. . . . In the last place, Ecclesiastical discipline.”—*Scotch Confession*, Art. xviii.

<sup>4</sup> “Wherefore the true Church may be discerned from the false by these notes. If the pure preaching of the Gospel do flourish in it; if it have the lawful administration of the Sacraments according to Christ’s institution; if it do use the right ecclesiastical discipline.”—*Belgic Confession*, Art. xxix.

<sup>5</sup> *Augsburg Confession*, Part I., Art. vii.

<sup>6</sup> Art. xv.

<sup>7</sup> Cap. viii.

<sup>8</sup> Art. xi.

Word and the administration of the Sacraments in the Visible Church demand an organised Ministry, and, further, that the *due* administration (*recte* administrantur) of the Sacraments necessitates a regard to Ecclesiastical Order and Discipline. The third Note of the Church, as laid down in the Homilies and the Ordinal, is thus implied, though not explicitly stated in our Article xix.

The Church as a visible Institution, working for man's salvation through human instrumentality, is the Lord's appointed means for continuing His own saving work in the world. Accordingly, just as we have seen that the essential characteristics of the Church as a Divine society are the counterparts of attributes of the Eternal Divine Nature, so now we shall find that the three notes or marks which characterise the Church as an Institution correspond to and have their roots in the Three-fold Office of the Incarnate Son of God—*Prophet, Priest, and King*.

The first and most obvious office of the Son of God Incarnate is that of *Prophet* or *Teacher*. The special object of His earthly life and ministry was that He might manifest, or declare, the Divine Name (*i.e.* the Revelation of the Divine Nature) to those whom the Father gave Him out of the world.<sup>1</sup> It is especially in the character of Teacher that our Lord is vividly portrayed in the Synoptic Gospels, and it was under the name of Teacher or Master (*διδάσκαλος*) that the Evangelists represent Him as generally known amongst His contemporaries, a name, moreover, that He Himself approved as applied to Himself—"Ye call Me Teacher and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am."<sup>2</sup> As we have seen above, His whole life and work was a Revelation of the Father<sup>3</sup> in words of power attested by miracles of love and mercy, so that men recognised Him as "a Prophet mighty in deed and word."<sup>4</sup> The conception of the Church as carrying on this Prophetic or Teaching work of Christ rests upon His own words. His Apostles, He implied, were to be "scribes instructed unto the

<sup>1</sup> S. John xvii. 6, 26.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 41, 42.

<sup>2</sup> S. John xiii. 13.

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke xxiv. 19.

Kingdom of Heaven.”<sup>1</sup> The Spirit, He promised, should lead them into all the Truth,<sup>2</sup> and before the Ascension He commissioned them to “make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe” all the things that He had commanded.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, we find that continuance in the Apostles’ teaching is mentioned as a note of the Church in the Acts,<sup>4</sup> that S. Paul realised that he was specially commissioned to “preach the Gospel,”<sup>5</sup> and handed on the same charge to Timothy, bidding him “preach the Word.”<sup>6</sup> The Church’s office is thus in the first place Prophetic, as Christ Himself was Prophet. The Church is a Dogmatic or Teaching Institution, preaching the pure Word of God. It is her function, by oral instruction, by preservation and interpretation of Holy Scripture, to appeal to the intellect of man, and to satisfy it with the Truth as it is in Jesus.

But the work of the Incarnate Son of God for us men did not end when His voice as a Teacher ceased to be heard in the world. Since the day of the Ascension, robed in our flesh, He “sitteth at the right hand of the Father.” When we say “sitteth” we mean to convey the idea that He *dwells*, or *abides permanently*, in glory at the Father’s right hand, and the expression must not be understood as in any way implying inaction. Christ in His heavenly glory is not sitting still, but has entered upon another phase of His work for us, to which His earthly life and sufferings led up. A glance at those passages of Scripture where we read that the Ascended Lord appeared to His faithful ones will show that by the word “sitteth” we do not intend to indicate bodily posture. To the Protomartyr Stephen, in his hour of extreme need and danger, was vouchsafed a vision of the glory of the Son of Man. “He looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus *standing* on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man *standing* on the right hand of God.”<sup>7</sup> Again to the

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xiii. 52.

<sup>2</sup> S. John xvi. 13.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Acts ii. 42.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. i. 17.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Acts vii. 55, 56.



beloved disciple in his lonely exile the well-loved form of the Master appeared, but transfigured in heavenly glory, "*walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks*";<sup>1</sup> and the Evangelist S. Mark, after describing the Ascension, tells how the Apostles went forth in obedience to the command they had received, "the Lord *working* with them."<sup>2</sup> But the activity of the Ascended Lord is much more than thus barely hinted at in Scripture, and we are not left in any uncertainty as to the character, scope, and purpose of His present work for man. If we turn again to the vision of S. John, we note he specially tells us that the Lord as seen by him in glory was "clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle";<sup>3</sup> in other words, the Lord appeared in the garb of a *Priest engaged in active service*. It is in the Epistle to the Hebrews, however, that the fullest and clearest teaching on this matter is given. We are there shown how that the necessary conditions for the due exercise of Priestly Office are fulfilled in our Lord's case, for He was called to such Office by God, who appointed Him a *Priest* for ever, after the Order of Melchizedek,<sup>4</sup> and on the other hand He is qualified to act on man's behalf by reason of His perfect sympathy with man.<sup>5</sup> So the writer of the Epistle leads us up to the "chief point"<sup>6</sup> of the things he would say, viz. that we have an eternal and ideal *High Priest*, who sat down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the Sanctuary and of the true Tabernacle.<sup>7</sup> As, under the typical dispensation of the Aaronic Priesthood, the High Priest entered alone, once in the year, with the blood of the sacrifice, into the Holiest Place within the veil,<sup>8</sup> so Christ has entered into Heaven itself, now to appear before the Face of God for us.<sup>9</sup> When we ask, then, in what light we are chiefly to regard our glorified Lord, the Scriptural answer is that He ever acts as our *High Priest*.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. i. 13; ii. 1.<sup>2</sup> S. Mark xvi. 20.<sup>3</sup> Rev. i. 13.<sup>4</sup> Heb. v. 5, 6.<sup>5</sup> Heb. iv. 15.<sup>6</sup> Heb. viii. 1.<sup>7</sup> Heb. viii. 1, 2.<sup>8</sup> Heb. ix. 7.<sup>9</sup> Heb. ix. 24.



Now the characteristic action of a Priest is threefold ; it is his special work—

- (1) *To offer sacrifice.*
- (2) *To make intercession.*
- (3) *To bless.*

Let us note how Scripture represents the Ascended Lord as fulfilling each of these characteristic functions.

(1) *Sacrifice.*

The Offering of Sacrifice is especially characteristic of Priestly Office. The underlying idea in Priesthood, and that not only amongst the Jews, but with other nations who had no express Divine Revelation, is that it is man's means of approach to the offended Deity. This being so, a Priest "must have somewhat to offer,"<sup>1</sup> since sin forfeits life. "Every High Priest, therefore, is ordained that He may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins."<sup>2</sup> Christ offered the one true Sacrifice, putting away sin by the Sacrifice of Himself upon the Cross.<sup>3</sup> The full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for the sins of the whole world was then and there finished. But the efficacy, the propitiatory virtue, of that Sacrifice is ever-living and continuous, and Christ, Himself both Priest and Victim, ever presents that completed Sacrifice before the Father in Heaven. In the Revelation of S. John, amid all the glory of the highest Heaven, He appears as "the Lamb as it had been slain,"<sup>4</sup> bearing the memorial of His Sacrifice ever before the Throne. His present work is, as our High Priest, ever to make propitiation for us before the Heavenly Mercy-Seat.

(2) *Intercession.*

Upon the ground of the Sacrifice of Himself offered to God as a sweet-smelling savour,<sup>5</sup> the Lord, as our High Priest, intercedes for us. We have as our all-powerful Intercessor Him who said, "Father, I know that Thou hearest Me always."<sup>6</sup> Christ is much more to the Christian than a noble Example and an inspiring Teacher, He is an ever-living Advocate with

<sup>1</sup> Heb. viii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. v. 1 ; viii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. ix. 26, 28.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. v. 6, 12.

<sup>5</sup> Eph. v. 2.

<sup>6</sup> S. John xi. 42.

the Father.<sup>1</sup> Because He abideth for ever, He hath His Priesthood unchangeable. Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.<sup>2</sup>

(3) *Blessing.*

God could not bless man in his sinful state, for to sin the curse of God is due. But Christ, as the second Adam,<sup>3</sup> is the Head of regenerate humanity. In Him the Father can look upon man with perfect satisfaction, so that He is fitted to be a Mediator,<sup>4</sup> in and through whom the Blessing of God rests upon man in all its fulness. He came to earth to bless—"God, having raised up His Servant, sent Him *to bless you*."<sup>5</sup> From first to last His life amongst men was one of blessing, and it was while He *lifted up His hands and blessed them* that He was parted from the disciples and carried up into Heaven.<sup>6</sup> Though the cloud has received Him from human sight, those sacred hands are still raised in blessing, and through Him all gifts and graces are showered upon His Church below. God hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.<sup>7</sup>

Just as the Church in her teaching capacity preserves and extends the Revelation of Christ, so also by her Sacramental system she carries on the Priestly work of her Head. Her service of worship and ministration of the Sacraments is a visible representation and an extension of Christ's present work in Heaven. Her sacramental ordinances are administered that we may realise what He is doing for us, and that through them we may appropriate His spiritual blessings. For this work of the Church in her sacramental ministration is not only representation, it is not a mere show reminding men by impressive actions of Christ's Sacrifice and Intercession in Heaven. The Sacraments are not empty and bare signs, but the work of the Church in this respect is an extension on earth of Christ's Priestly activity; it is His own appointed

<sup>1</sup> 1 S. John ii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. vii. 24, 25; cf. Rom. viii. 34.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 22, 45.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15; xii. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Acts iii. 26.

<sup>6</sup> S. Luke xxiv. 50, 51.

<sup>7</sup> Eph. i. 3.

channel whereby the gifts and graces He wins are conveyed to men. The Body on earth is, in her character as a Sacramental Institution, associated with the work of her Heavenly High Priest. The central idea of her highest act of worship—the Holy Eucharist—is that it is a representation on earth of what Christ does in Heaven. In that service we the members on earth are associated “with the whole company of Heaven,” we enter the Holy of Holies and *plead the One Sacrifice* before the Father with the very actions and words of Christ Himself. We are joined with our High Priest in His pleading of His all-sufficient Sacrifice before the Throne. Then, since Christ by presentation of His Sacrifice wins for us free access to the Highest Heaven, we relying on His merits come boldly to the Throne of Grace that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need.<sup>1</sup> Hence the Eucharist is the Church’s great service of *Intercession* for the whole Body of the members, whether militant here in earth or in the waiting state beyond the grave. It is especially at the moment when we entreat the Father to accept our [Eucharistic Sacrifice that we beseech Him that “we and all His whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His Passion.” The Church’s whole system of worship and intercession, wherein all her prayers conclude “through Jesus Christ our Lord,” centre round the Sacrament of His own appointment, and the intercessions of us men who know not how to pray as we ought, are linked with His prevailing intercession in Heaven. Further, through the whole Sacramental system, in all the sacred ordinances administered in His Name, in Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Holy Orders, and in the Absolution of penitents, Christ’s spiritual *Blessing* is conveyed to men. Though the outward acts are performed through an earthly ministry, it is the Lord Himself, our High Priest, Whose hand is raised to bless and to absolve. “Whatsoever they (the ministers of the Church) do to you, as when they baptise you, when they give you absolution, and distribute to you the

<sup>1</sup> Heb. iv. 16.

Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, these you shall so esteem as if Christ Himself in His own Person did speak and minister unto you.”<sup>1</sup>

But when we say of Christ that He *sitteth* at the right hand of the Father we do not only imply the thought that He abides permanently in glory. The word also carries with it the idea that He *sits enthroned as King*. “The LORD said unto My Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.”<sup>2</sup> God, having raised Christ from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, hath put all things under His feet, and hath given Him to be *Head over all things to the Church*.<sup>3</sup> He is *King of Kings and Lord of Lords*.<sup>4</sup> As the Church carries on the Prophetic work of her Head, and shares in His Priestly Office and functions, so too she shares His *Royal Power*. It is her prerogative as the Body of Christ to rule and judge, and she has power to regulate and direct the practical life of man in the world. Christ has committed to the Church the power of binding and loosing, and she may when circumstances so require impose penance, and in extreme cases pass sentence of excommunication. It is within her province to lay down rules for communion, to maintain institutions, providing for due observance of days and seasons such as the Lord’s Day, and to regulate from time to time the customs and ceremonies which are the outward bonds and the visible testimony of her corporate life.

Looked at from the higher side, the Notes of the Church as a Dogmatic, Sacramental, and Disciplinary Institution have their ground in the Threefold Office of Christ. If, however, we regard the same characteristics from the human side we see how the Church of God must have these three marks if, as an institution, it is to meet the needs and satisfy the capacities of human nature.

Man is a rational and intelligent being, seeking, and legitimately seeking, to work his ideas into a connected whole.

<sup>1</sup> *Cranmer’s Catechism* (1548), p. 197.      <sup>2</sup> Ps. cx. i.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. i. 20–22.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16.

The salvation of man implies the perfection of his whole nature, a healthy activity in each department of his complex life, so that the sphere of mind cannot be left out of account. The Church as a Preacher of Doctrine appeals to the intellectual side of man's nature, and the acceptance on man's part of the Truth she bears ensures sound and fruitful mental activity.

Man is spirit. His true life consists in communion with God, in intercourse with God—not merely in knowing about Him—and within are strange deep longings which nothing short of God Himself can ever really satisfy. The Church as the home of worship appeals to this highest side of man's nature, and by dispensation of sacramental grace brings to the spirit of sinful man regeneration, justification, and sanctification, purifying the soul and leading it onward from grace to grace until it shall be fitted to behold the Face of God with joy.

But man does not move only in an atmosphere of mental abstraction, nor does he live and act in this world as spirit merely, but his activity is expressed through body, and body is no mere accident or unfortunate temporary accompaniment of our nature, but an integral part of it. A Divine system of salvation must obviously take account of this, and accordingly the Church of God has its outward form and organisation, its rules and laws adapted to the present actual condition of men living in a material system with which their own daily life in the body is bound up.

Many modern writers on Theology have drawn attention to the historical development of these characteristics of the Christian Church which we are now considering. It is often pointed out :—

1. That the Church was at first *spiritual*—a holy society. It was the “*coetus fidelium*,” the assembly of the saints, in which the bond of union was a spiritual one—the consciousness of salvation in Jesus Christ.

2. But men did not leave their minds behind when they entered the Church, and with the Christianising of Greek

thought came a pressing necessity that the Christian should give reason for the faith that was in him, so that the Church entered upon a scholastic period when its creeds were formulated and its doctrines logically defined. Nor can it be reasonably held that movement in this direction was in itself and of necessity a down-grade movement. For, if the Church was to do its work of sanctification of the whole man it could not ignore or leave out of account his intellectual activity. As it enlarged its bounds it had to consider and provide for manifold phases of human life, so that it was found necessary to resist philosophies that tended to evaporate the great Christian facts, and fanaticisms that would have superseded them, and this was done—as it could alone be effectually done—by fully stating and carefully guarding the Truth; by laying down a rule of faith, taught to candidates for Baptism, and without the acceptance of which membership in the Church was not possible.

3. Further, the rule of faith and gifts of grace were guaranteed to the world through duly accredited teachers and officers of a visible organised society. By the time of Irenæus and Tertullian we find it held as a principle that the possession of the Apostolic inheritance is guaranteed by the Episcopal succession traceable back to the beginning. "This answered no doubt to the truth: the Church had a continuous history, and a continuous consciousness; and it was natural to seek the organs of these in her ministers. . . . they were in virtue of their ordination the depositories and guardians of the Apostolic inheritance, the custodians of the truth, and, through the Sacraments, of the grace of the Gospel."<sup>1</sup>

At the present time there is a tendency to distinguish too sharply between these three characteristic aspects of the Church's life and work; to speak as though the Church had been at the first wholly spiritual, a society of saints without creed or organisation, and then by a process of degeneration in which its spirituality was lost became intellectual, a school

<sup>1</sup> DENNEY, *Studies in Theology*, pp. 196, 197.



of doctrine, and finally by a further down-grade movement became hierarchical and was metamorphosed into a clerical polity. It would be rather true to say that all these characters are inherent and were present from the beginning. The first Christians at Jerusalem, we read, continued stedfastly in the Breaking of Bread and in the prayers; they formed a *spiritual* community. But the other characteristics were not absent; we are told that at the same time they also continued stedfastly in the Apostles' *doctrine* and *fellowship*.<sup>1</sup> Thus from Pentecostal days were the three characteristics all of them present in germ, and in subsequent times one or other of them comes more prominently to the front and is emphasised, as the needs of the age may require. It is true that errors in doctrine and faults in practice have arisen from an undue exaltation of some one of these three aspects at the expense of the others; yet each of these elements is necessary in its due place to make up the idea of the Church, and to contribute to her effective working for the salvation of the whole man, so that when deprived of any of them she leads a maimed existence.

We may observe in conclusion, for the further confirmation of our argument, how these Notes of the Church were foreshadowed in the Divinely ordained system of the Old Covenant. The Israel of God had its three aspects as Revelation, Church, and Kingdom, and the earthly Jerusalem was a type or shadow of the City of the Living God,<sup>2</sup> the heavenly Jerusalem which is our Mother.<sup>3</sup> For—

(a) Jerusalem was the place Jehovah chose, to put His name there.<sup>4</sup> There was the Ark of the Covenant, in which the Divine Law was laid up. There God revealed Himself to His own. It is out of Zion that the prophets picture the law, or teaching, as going forth, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup>

(b) The earthly city also foreshadowed the heavenly in that it was the home of worship. The Temple at Jerusalem was

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xii. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iv. 26.

<sup>4</sup> Deut. xii. 5, 11; 1 Kings viii. 29.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. ii. 3; Micah iv. 2.



the centre of worship and sacrifice, where Israel, through the Aaronic priesthood, exercised its prerogative as a priestly nation, and drew near to the Most High.

(c) Jerusalem was not only the central shrine, but also the political head of the Hebrew nation; it was the Royal City. There was the throne of judgment, the seat of the House of David,<sup>1</sup> the centre of all rule and organisation for God's people.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxxii. 5.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CHURCH ONE

OUR Lord, on the eve of His Passion, indicated His will that His followers, by virtue of their union with Himself, should partake of and exhibit a Divine unity.<sup>1</sup> That the union which He so earnestly desires for those that believe in Him is not merely an invisible and spiritual one, but also a visible and evidential one, Christ puts beyond all doubt when He adds to His prayer the words "that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me." It is thus in accord with the Master's express will that Christians have always regarded unity as one of the fundamental characteristics of the Church, and amongst the essential notes of the Church as stated in the Creeds unity has by common consent of the Christian Society been assigned the first place. Christians all the world over, through the long centuries, have professed, and do still profess, their faith in *One*, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

If it be asked, "What is meant by unity as a mark of the Church?" the obvious and immediate answer is that we believe and profess that the Church of Christ is numerically one. When we mention unity foremost among the essential notes of the Church, we mean that *numerical oneness* belongs to the very essence or nature of the Church as a Divine Society; there is One Body and One Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

Thus in any given locality there can, in the very nature of things, be only one Church of Christ. When men have

<sup>1</sup> S. John xvii. 20, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. iv. 4.

by Baptism put on Christ,<sup>1</sup> and been incorporated into Him, they are also by necessary consequence united to one another as members of One Body.<sup>2</sup> Hence, in Scripture, all Christian people in a given place are members of the One Church, and those outside the One Church (whether unbaptized heathen or unworthy members who have been excommunicated) are not Christians. In his letters to local Churches S. Paul does not take into account any possible case of Christians not attached to the One Body, or of more associations of believers in Christ than one in any given city; he writes, *e.g.*, “unto the Church of God which is at Corinth,”<sup>3</sup> and “unto the Church of the Thessalonians,”<sup>4</sup> intending to address his Epistle in each case to all the Christians in the locality in question, as he does in the parallel salutations “to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colossæ,”<sup>5</sup> or “to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi.”<sup>6</sup> Similarly the membership of all professing Christians in the One Church of their respective localities is assumed in those messages addressed by the Lord from Heaven to the Seven Churches of Asia through His servant John.<sup>7</sup> Again, to give an illustration from without the Canonical Scriptures, in the letter of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, which is a letter from a Church to a Church, it is to be observed that there is only one Church in Rome and one in Corinth, and throughout the whole Epistle the unity of the Church is especially emphasised.

We have seen that all Christians in any given locality are, by virtue of their Baptism, banded together in one Society, called the ἐκκλησία (the Church) of such and such a place. Hence in the New Testament when the writer has in view the companies of Christians in more than one locality, or the societies dispersed over a wide district, mention is made of *Churches* (ἐκκλησίαι) in the plural. Thus S. Paul addresses “the Churches of Galatia.”<sup>8</sup> Again in his first letter to the

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iii. 27.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 27.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Col. i. 2.      <sup>6</sup> Phil. i. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. ii. ; iii.      <sup>8</sup> Gal. i. 2.

Corinthians the same Apostle speaks of rules which he lays down "in all the Churches,"<sup>1</sup> and refers in another place to the custom of "the Churches of God" as deciding a controverted ritual point.<sup>2</sup> "God," he writes further on in the same Epistle, is the author "not of confusion, but of peace; as in all the Churches of the saints."<sup>3</sup> But this same word *ἐκκλησία*, which is used in a narrow sense to designate the body of believers in a certain locality,<sup>4</sup> or even in a single household,<sup>5</sup> is also used to denote the body of believers in general as distinguished from the world outside;<sup>6</sup> the same word *ἐκκλησία* in the singular stands for the whole body of Christians as God's people.<sup>7</sup> The local *ἐκκλησίαι* of the New Testament are not separate and independent institutions, no local company of Christians is a distinct body in itself and autonomous, but all the baptized are *ipso facto* members of the one great fellowship of Christians, and a local *ἐκκλησία* is but the organisation in a particular place of the One Catholic Church. We must observe too that the unity of the various *ἐκκλησίαι* in one great *ἐκκλησία* is not an afterthought resulting from the voluntary association of scattered local Churches, which might conceivably have stood alone as separate societies, but it is an essential unity. It is especially to be remarked that Ecclesiastical unity, as treated in S. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, arises, not from the historical side, not from the outward circumstances of actual Christian communities, but from the theological side, from the development of thought respecting the place and office of the risen and ascended Son of God. The Apostle grounds the unity of the Church, not upon joint and united action of local communities which has already taken place, nor upon the moral duty of united action on the part of Christians (though of course he does inculcate this),<sup>8</sup> but he grounds the Church's

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. vii. 17.<sup>2</sup> I Cor. xi. 16.<sup>3</sup> I Cor. xiv. 33.<sup>4</sup> See, besides the examples already quoted, Acts xi. 22; xiii. 1.<sup>5</sup> Rom. xvi. 5; Philem. 2.<sup>6</sup> I Cor. x. 32.<sup>7</sup> Eph. v. 25, 27; Col. i. 24; Heb. xii. 22, 23.<sup>8</sup> Eph. iv. 1-3.

unity upon the theological consideration of its essential nature as the Body of the One Lord, Whose Resurrection and Ascension has made the formation of such an organic Society possible by means of the outpouring of the One Spirit.<sup>1</sup> It is because of what Christ, risen and ascended, is to Christians, and because of the indwelling Spirit, that all the baptized are necessarily and essentially One Body, and it follows by consequence from this essential oneness that Christian communities are in practice found to exhibit common activity, and that the Apostle can insist so emphatically upon united and harmonious action as a moral duty.

Just as the Church, whether considered as locally organised in any given place, or as extended throughout the world, is found to be essentially one, so too if we view the life and work of the Christian society through successive ages, there is no break to be found in it, but a continuity in faith and work from the day of Pentecost to our own time, a visible continuity which is owing to and arises from the essential oneness of historical life which possesses the Church, so that though locally organised in various countries, though fulfilling its activity in many ways and by many means as the centuries roll on—everywhere and through all time there is one and one only Church of Christ. The visible continuity of the faith and work of the Christian Society of which we have spoken may be illustrated by a concrete example. It is, for instance, strongly brought home to us when we visit any of those sacred fanes which are our precious heritage from earlier days, and which link our present-day Christianity with that of the first missionaries to our forefathers. What thoughts arise when we visit the scene of the martyrdom of S. Alban, the protomartyr of Britain! Old Verulam, the pagan city on the plain, with its temples, its baths and walls, has passed away, though the antiquary may still trace its ruins here and there. But on that same “flowery hill” of which the historian speaks in describing the scene of S. Alban’s death<sup>2</sup> the great Abbey still stands. As we look upon the

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv. 4 *et seqq.*

<sup>2</sup> BEDE, *Hist. Eccles.*, book i. cap. vii.

majestic fabric we cannot but think of the many changes that have passed over it. On the spot where the martyr's blood was shed a famous monastery arose. There a wonderful work was done for God ; the torch of learning was kept alight in a dark age ; the poor and needy were tended and cared for in the Name of Christ. Then came the upheaval of the Reformation. Religion must have seemed for a time to be shaken to its very foundations. The monastery was ruined and its tenants driven forth. Upon the great Church itself the sacrilegious spoiler of the sixteenth century, the fanatical religionist of the seventeenth, and the mistaken restorer of the nineteenth, have alike done their worst. Yet still the old Church stands. There is still professed day by day that same holy Faith of our fathers for which Alban died. The same sacramental grace is given to-day in that Temple which the fugitive priest in those far-off times brought to the young Roman noble. From that sacred fane still rings out over a weary world the precious message of the Incarnation and Resurrection of the Son of God, bringing new hope, new aid, new life to struggling humanity. Still the Abbey Church stands, as much a centre of Christian faith and work as ever, the Cathedral of a newly formed Diocese, like a great throbbing artery through which streams of quickening energy flow over a large section of the Body of Christ. But the underlying cause of this continuity in faith and work must be sought, and is only to be found, in the essential oneness of life which possesses the whole Church of Christ from the beginning till to-day. Outward circumstances may have changed, the conditions of the work may have changed, and the particular means for best carrying it on may have needed various modifications, but the work is the same, the underlying faith is the same, because there is one life of the Body of Christ. "There is One Body and One Spirit . . . One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in all."<sup>1</sup>

Though the Church of Christ is essentially one, its unity

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv. 4-6.

is not yet perfect, but the essential unity has yet to be fully manifested and adequately set forth in the moral unity, the united harmonious action of all the members of the Christian community. The position maintained by the Church of Rome, indeed, is that even here and now, in respect of unity, the true Church of Christ must necessarily be "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,"<sup>1</sup> a position from whence there follows as a corollary the conclusion that the One Church is to be found only in the communion of the See of Rome. But because unity is an attribute of the Church it does not therefore necessarily follow that there will always be united action on the part of the members, nor is it necessary that the Church should be absolutely free from division. Unity, in fact, is an ideal conception which is at one and the same time revealed but not fully realised by the Church militant. The Church militant is to the ideal of unity as a finished building to the architect's conception. When we gaze upon the masterpieces of Gothic architecture there rise before us visions of the cloud-capped towers, the heaven-high vaults that the designers of Salisbury and Lincoln, of Amiens and Cologne must have beheld. The realisation in stone falls far short of the architect's ideal, yet, imperfect as it is, and perhaps marred by after-mutilations of unsympathetic hands, without it we would have no knowledge of the grand conception of the genius of the architect. This may serve to illustrate our subject, but we must not forget that the comparison is inadequate, because in the one case the building in stone remains fixed an imperfect revelation of the designer's conception, whereas the Church of Christ, on the other hand, is capable of growth and is destined to advance towards the ideal which it sets forth till that ideal is fully realised.

That the ideal of unity revealed through the Church of Christ was not at once realised, but that an effective unity of the members is only to be perfectly attained by degrees and through effort, need not be a stumbling-block to us.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v. 27.



To admit that it is so is only to recognise that God's way of working in the Dispensation of the Incarnation is parallel to His way of working in other spheres.

Perfection characterises the works in nature of Him Who is infinite Wisdom, Power, and Love. Yet this world was very far from being at the outset created absolutely perfect, but it is so constituted as to reach its destined perfection through (what appear to us) slow stages of development, through long ages of struggle and effort, and if we, with our finite understanding, limit our attention to one particular stage in the world's progress, there is apparent confusion and disorder.

In like manner if we regard God's promises made in His Revelation to the Jewish Church, though we believe that the Old Testament Theocracy and religious system were Divinely ordained, and though unity, holiness, and permanence are prominent attributes of the Hebrew Church and nation in the writings of inspired Lawgiver, Prophet and Psalmist, yet as we read the historical books we learn how the chosen people was rent by schism, went a-whoring after strange gods, and was led away captive to Babylon.

In the case of the Christian Church, accordingly, it does not follow from her essential unity that there will at no time be discord or disunion amongst her members. On the contrary, arguing from analogy, we should rather expect the trials arising from these to form part of the probation of her members, and their presence certainly cannot be held to furnish proof that the Church is not a Divine Society. Even in the first age of the Church an Apostle could write to his converts: "I hear that there are divisions among you; and I partly believe it; for there must be also factions amongst you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."<sup>1</sup>

That the Master's own ideal of the Divine unity of His Church was not to be realised at once appears both from the earnestness of His reiterated prayer for the unity of His disciples, as well as from the very form in which that prayer

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 18, 19.

was cast: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; . . . *that they may be made perfect* in one."<sup>1</sup> As the perfection of Christian unity is thus declared in the Gospel to be something the consummation of which was earnestly desired and prayed for by Christ, so too in the Apostolic Epistles unity is set forth as something for the consummation of which Christians are to strenuously exert themselves.<sup>2</sup> The perfection of unity is to be *grown into* by degrees. S. Paul speaks of the ministry as given to the Church "for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the Body of Christ: till we all *attain unto the unity* of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."<sup>3</sup>

While S. Paul exhibits the essential unity of the Body of Christ, his letters are at the same time full of practical exhortations to united action on the part of the members, and of warnings against discord and division. To the Romans he writes: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned, and turn away from them."<sup>4</sup> The Galatians, too, he warns against manifest works of the flesh, which are these, "factions, divisions, parties."<sup>5</sup> How do his Epistles, moreover, abound in exhortations to unity! "I beseech you, brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."<sup>6</sup> "Be of the same mind, live in peace."<sup>7</sup> "That ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind, doing nothing through faction."<sup>8</sup> Thus because of the Church's essential oneness moral unity is inculcated as a duty. We, as members of the One Church, are bidden to cultivate and

<sup>1</sup> S. John xvii. 20 *et seqq.*

<sup>3</sup> Eph. iv. 12, 13.

<sup>5</sup> Gal. v. 19, 20.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. iv. 3, σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. xvi. 17.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. i. 10.

<sup>8</sup> Phil. ii. 2, 3.

strive after an effective unity. The Church, because it is One, should also be united.

The moral unity of the members of the One Church is secured and fostered by certain bonds and safeguards, some of them being invisible—graces which conduce to common and sympathetic activity—others again being visible ordinances and organisations of the Christian Society which are intended to secure external united action on the part of the members.

To take first the invisible bonds :—

It is especially noted as a mark of the first Christian community at Jerusalem that the members were united by a common faith : “They continued stedfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine.”<sup>1</sup> Belief in God, and faith in Jesus, Who died and rose again from the dead, as both Lord and Christ, have been required from the Day of Pentecost as necessary conditions of entrance to Christian fellowship ; and the possession of this common faith has been, historically, a fundamental uniting principle, which has bound Christians together and induced common action. The Church is charged with the message of a Revelation to the world, a Revelation bound up with the Person of the Divine Christ Who said, “I am the Truth.”<sup>2</sup> Apart from belief in this Truth, which He is, there can be no united action on the part of Christians in bearing the Gospel to the nations. It is this acceptance of Christ by faith, this holding of the Faith once for all delivered to the saints,<sup>3</sup> which underlies the moral unity of the members of the Church. “There is One Body . . . One Faith.”<sup>4</sup>

For those who accept Christ by faith and commit themselves to Him He is in them “the hope of glory.”<sup>5</sup> The community of hope and aspiration which God inspires in His faithful ones also tends naturally to foster common action in the present and united effort for the attainment of the common hope. “There is One Body . . . even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.”<sup>6</sup>

Further, those who individually accept Christ and are

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 42.

<sup>2</sup> S. John xiv. 6.

<sup>3</sup> S. Jude 3.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. iv. 4, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Col. i. 27.

<sup>6</sup> Eph. iv. 4.

brought near to Him in love are not joined to Him as isolated units, but are necessarily brought near to one another in the same bond of Divine love. They love Christ because He first loved them,<sup>1</sup> but their respective individual love of Him Whom they have not seen is manifested in their love of the brethren.<sup>2</sup> The Church is the household of God,<sup>3</sup> the members are brethren.<sup>4</sup> As in a human family the chief bond of union amongst the members is devotion to the head, so with the members of God's family it is the common love for and devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, carrying with it as a consequence fraternal love, forbearance, and consideration, which, more than coincidence of opinion or of practice, is the great uniting power. "Forbearing one another in love," Christians "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."<sup>5</sup>

While the great internal principle of unity and incentive to united action amongst Christians is faith in, and devotion to, the Lord Jesus Christ, there are, besides, certain visible and external ordinances, which are at the same time outward signs of the internal unity, safeguards by which that unity is protected, and means also by which it is promoted, bonds by which united action on the part of the members of the Church is fostered and maintained.

First of these we must mention the two great Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself. Baptism, viewed in its obvious significance as an outward sign, is (as we have already had occasion to note<sup>6</sup>) a token of common profession, a badge of allegiance to a common Lord, a proof of the possession of, and adherence to, a common faith. "There is One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism."<sup>7</sup> But, being a Sacrament, Baptism is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual

<sup>1</sup> 1 S. John iv. 19.

<sup>2</sup> 1 S. John iii. 10 *et seqq.*; iv. 20, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. ii. 19; Gal. vi. 10.

<sup>4</sup> ἀδελφοί is one of the commonest modes of address in the New Testament; cf. esp. 1 Cor. v. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Eph. iv. 2, 3.

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup> Eph. iv. 5.

grace.<sup>1</sup> Besides, therefore, being an outward token of unity, Baptism is, by reason of the grace therein conveyed, a very means of that same unity. It is the act whereby men are brought near and united to one another spiritually, through their incorporation into the mystical Body of the One Lord. "By One Spirit were we all baptized into One Body . . . and were all watered with One Spirit."<sup>2</sup> In such words does S. Paul refer to Baptism as a great Sacramental means of unity. The Eucharist too, if we regard the plain significance of the common action performed therein by all the members—the partaking of one Bread and the drinking of one Cup—is in its nature a Sacrament of unity. "We, though many, are One Bread, One Body, for we all partake of the One Bread."<sup>3</sup> Yet the Eucharist is not in such sense a Sacrament of unity as to be merely an outward token or pledge of a union which independently exists, but it is an "effectual sign";<sup>4</sup> it does itself maintain and foster the unity of Christians, because it is the means whereby all who partake share the life of Christ, so that He, Who binds all the members in one, thereby dwells in them, and they in Him. "There is one Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one Cup unto unity in His Blood."<sup>5</sup> The Eucharist being thus the bond of the unity of the members of the mystical Body of Christ, the Altar stands as the chief emblem of unity, so that S. Ignatius, when he would indicate a man's membership in the Church, speaks of him as "within the Altar."<sup>6</sup> It is obvious that he can only so write because, for him, as for S. Paul, the Sacrament of the Altar is the great bond and safeguard of Christian unity; and in all ages to excommunicate, *i.e.* to preclude a person from access to the Altar, has been taken as equivalent to exclusion from the unity of the Christian Society.

But in the administration of the Communion as a bond of unity it will at once appear that there is involved a question

<sup>1</sup> According to the definition of a Sacrament in the *Church Catechism*.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 13.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. x. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Art. xxv.

<sup>5</sup> S. IGNATIUS, *Ep. to the Philadelphians*, iv.

<sup>6</sup> S. IGNATIUS, *Ep. to the Ephesians*, v.

of discipline. If there is to be "one Altar,"<sup>1</sup> the orderly government of the Church is presupposed, and it must be clearly and definitely laid down whose is the right of celebrating and administering the Communion, otherwise we shall have Altar set up against Altar, and the scandal of rival communions; to the world a plain token of division amongst those who should be united. But, in the providence of God, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, due provision has been made for guarding the unity of the Body by orderly organisation. From the very beginning it has been a ruling principle of the Church that they who maintain fellowship and communion with the Apostles, and later with those appointed to succeed them—viz. the bishops—are guarded and kept in the unity of the mystical Body of Christ. Of the first Church at Jerusalem it is expressly recorded that the members "continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of the Bread."<sup>2</sup> In sub-Apostolic times, especially in the writings of S. Ignatius, the Episcopate appears as a principal safeguard of the Church's unity. "Be ye careful," writes the martyr-bishop, "therefore, to observe one Eucharist (for there is one Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ) and one Cup unto union in His Blood, there is one Altar, as there is one Bishop."<sup>3</sup> In the mind of the writer the "one Altar" is on the same footing as the One Faith, the One Baptism; and the "one Altar" depends on the "one Bishop." Hence in another place Ignatius says "that is a valid<sup>4</sup> Eucharist which is celebrated by the Bishop, or by one to whom he gives sanction."<sup>5</sup> Many passages might also be quoted from the same Father where, viewing the relation of the Ministry to the Church in its corporate aspect, he sets forth the Episcopate and the Presbytery as the bond and safeguard of unity, apart from whom, or without whose consent and sanction, no action is to be done. The Lord is said to forgive the penitent, if in his repentance he return to the

<sup>1</sup> S. IGNATIUS, *Ep. to the Magnesians*, vii.; *Ep. to the Philadelphians*, iv.

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 42.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. to the Philadelphians*, iv.

<sup>4</sup> βέβαια.

<sup>5</sup> *Ep. to the Smyræans*, viii.



council of the Bishop,<sup>1</sup> and the union of man and woman in marriage is to be undertaken with the consent of the Bishop, that the marriage may be after the Lord, and not after concupiscence.<sup>2</sup> In the context of the passage on the "one Altar" quoted above, S. Ignatius exhorts the Smyrnæans, "Shun divisions as the beginning of evils. Do ye all follow your Bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the Apostles; and to the deacons pay respect as to God's commandment. Let no man do aught of things pertaining to the Church apart from the Bishop . . . . It is not lawful apart from the Bishop either to baptize or to hold a love-feast."<sup>3</sup> Similarly he warns the Philadelphians against disunion, "where there is division and anger, there God abideth not. Now the Lord forgiveth all men when they repent, if repenting they return to the unity of God, and to the council of the Bishop."<sup>4</sup>

The Church's unity may be obscured by a loosening of those bonds which we have mentioned, or by a departure from those safeguards, either visible or invisible, which serve to maintain and protect the united action of Christian people.

Thus the unity of the Church is obscured by a departure on the part of some from the Catholic Faith of the Church, which is the great internal uniting principle. Such departure we call *heresy*. In a normal state of things any such departure from the Faith of the Church on fundamental points will also be followed by a rupture of outward communion, by interruption of the external bonds of union. For since heresy divides the sound deposit which constitutes the One Faith of the Church, and therefore cuts at the internal bond between the members, it carries with it, in natural course, an outward severance in communion and in discipline. That those for whom the internal incentive to united action has practically disappeared should still present outwardly a united front must be an indication of confusion, unreality, and undue laxity. S. Cyprian, in combating such latitudinarian notion of a

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. to the Philadelphians*, viii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. to Polycarp*, v.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. to the Smyrnæans*, viii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep. to the Philadelphians*, viii.



federation of rival, and to some extent opposing, bodies, recalls how "the Lord Himself admonishes and teaches us in His Gospel, saying, And there shall be one flock and one Shepherd."<sup>1</sup> We must therefore altogether reject the proposals of such as would wish to hold communion with various sects or denominations of professing Christians, separated from each other in the same locality.

The Church's unity is also obscured by a disregard, on the part of some of the baptized, of the visible bonds and safeguards of union, by an interruption of an outward communion—a setting up of Altar against Altar, and a refusal to recognise the authority and jurisdiction of the Episcopate. Such interruption of the Church's united action we call *schism*. Schism may be of two kinds:—

(i.) There are cases of *internal schism*, *i.e.* rupture within the Church. This occurs when both parties hold fast to the unity of the faith and both retain the due administration of the Sacraments of the Gospel by a constitutional ministry, both alike retaining the Episcopal government and succession unimpaired and both adhering to the traditional discipline; and yet for reasons which appear urgent and imperative to one or both parties they suspend communion the one with the other. Of such kind is the long-standing schism between Eastern and Western Christendom, and of the same kind also is the separation between the Anglican Church and the Church of Rome.

(ii.) From schism of this kind we distinguish the much more serious and dangerous *external schism*, *i.e.* rupture from the Church, which occurs when one or other of the bonds of unity is given up altogether and denied. As schism of this kind we must reckon the action of Dissenters in our own country and of modern sectaries in Russia. Though the Church's essential unity is indeed more or less grievously obscured by such schism, it would be altogether an error to imagine it destroyed thereby. In so far as those who have separated themselves from the outward communion of the Church, and

<sup>1</sup> *De Unitate*, p. 255, ed. Pamelii.

made sects for themselves, retain the One Catholic Faith and duly observe and administer the Sacrament of the One Baptism, just so far are they still partakers in the life of the One Church, though unfortunately not realising to the full, and consequently not acting up to, their privileges in the household of God. S. Augustine has some very pertinent words on this subject in his treatise *De Baptismo*. That Father was confronted with a difficulty very like that which presses upon ourselves to-day. He could not but sympathetically observe the genuine Christian faith of many who yet were organised into separate and even rival bodies. He meets the difficulty thus: "There is One Church," he writes, "which alone is called Catholic, and wherever it finds any elements of itself, in these communions of different bodies which are separate from itself, it is by means of this element so found that the Church regenerates, and not the separate communion. It is certainly not their separation which regenerates, but that element which they have received from the Church. . . . The regeneration, then, in each case proceeds from the Church and from the retention of its Sacraments, for from them alone can such regeneration proceed."<sup>1</sup>

Though misunderstanding, strife, and division amongst baptized Christians does not destroy the essential unity of the Church of Christ, yet since it obscures that unity it must always be a stumbling-block and a serious hindrance to the progress of the cause of Christ in the world. Therefore united action is a duty of the members of the Church. The Scriptures themselves, while they clearly set forth the Church's essential unity, are full of exhortations to moral unity. Accordingly we find that any tendency towards disunion—much more to separation—is represented as an evil by New Testament writers, that they warn their readers against any such tendency in earnest and vehement language, and that any desire to stand alone, more or less apart from the brethren, is regarded as incompatible with the Christian calling. S. Paul, when he had received intimation of contentions amongst the

<sup>1</sup> *De Baptismo*, i. 14.

Christians at Corinth,<sup>1</sup> at once pens an impassioned warning against the spirit of faction that was being manifested. So abhorrent is factious party spirit, such as was rife at Corinth, to the Apostle's mind that he can only give an idea of its enormity by hinting that it is tantamount to the sin of dividing Christ Himself, and seeking to put a human leader in the place which Christ alone should occupy. "Is Christ divided?" he asks. "Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptiz<sup>d</sup> into the name of Paul?"<sup>2</sup> Again, in writing to the Romans, the same Apostle expressly intimates that factious spirit is incompatible with the service of Christ, when he gives the stern warning—"I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them, for they serve not the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup> S. Jude also, of New Testament writers, speaks in no measured language of the sin of separation from the unity of the Church. He reminds his readers of the Apostolic warning "that there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts," and adds, "these be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."<sup>4</sup>

The early Fathers in like manner denounce the sinfulness of those who act in a factious spirit and cause division amongst Christians.

S. Clement of Rome in his letter to Corinth writes: "Wherefore are there strifes and wraths and factions and divisions and war among you? Have we not one God and one Christ and one Spirit of grace that was shed upon us? And is there not one calling in Christ? Wherefore do we tear and rend asunder the members of Christ, and stir up factions against our own body, and reach such a pitch of folly, as to forget that we are members one of another? Remember the words of Jesus our Lord: for He said, 'Woe unto that man; it were good for him if he had not been born, rather than that he should offend one of Mine elect. It were better for him that a mill-stone were

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 10, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. i. 13.

<sup>4</sup> S. Jude 18, 19.

hanged about him, and he cast into the sea, than that he should pervert one of Mine elect.' Your division has perverted many; it hath brought many to despair, many to doubting, and all of us to sorrow. And your sedition still continueth."<sup>1</sup> We have already seen how for S. Ignatius the Divinely constituted Ministry of the Church is a principal external bond of union, so that the Bishop stands as the embodiment of the Church's unity, and accordingly he severely censures those whose separatist spirit is manifested by their acting apart from, and without the knowledge or consent of, the Bishop. "Some men," he writes, "have the Bishop's name on their lips, but in everything act apart from him. Such men appear to me not to keep a good conscience."<sup>2</sup> "He that doeth aught without the Bishop and presbytery and deacons, this man is not clean in his conscience."<sup>3</sup> "He that doeth aught without the knowledge of the Bishop rendereth service to the devil."<sup>4</sup> So, too, in reference to sound faith, which is the internal principle of unity, Ignatius warns the Philadelphians, "As children of the light and of the truth, avoid division and wrong doctrines; and where the shepherd is, there follow ye as sheep. For many specious wolves with baneful delights lead captive the runners in God's race; but, where ye are at one, they will find no place. . . . If any man followeth one that maketh a schism, he doth not inherit the kingdom of God."<sup>5</sup>

The *Shepherd* of Hermas contains several striking passages which emphasise the sinfulness and the dire consequences of wilful separation from the Church's unity:—

"But the rest (of the stones) whom thou hast seen lying in great numbers, not going to the building, of these they that are mildewed are they that knew the truth, but did not abide in it, nor cleave to the saints. Therefore they are useless."<sup>6</sup> "Some of them were double-minded and caused dissensions. For these then there is repentance, if they repent speedily

<sup>1</sup> Cap. xlv.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. to the Trallians*, vii.

<sup>5</sup> *Ep. to the Philadelphians*, ii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. to the Magnesians*, iv.

<sup>4</sup> *Ep. to the Smyrnæans*, ix.

<sup>6</sup> Vis. iii. 6.

and continue not in their pleasures ; but if they continue in their doings, they likewise procure for themselves death.”<sup>1</sup> “ But they that are mildewed, these are they that denied and turned not again unto their Lord, but having become barren and desert, because they cleave not unto the servants of God, but remain alone, they destroy their own souls.”<sup>2</sup>

This view of the New Testament writers and of the Apostolic Fathers, that communion between Christians is a vital matter, and those who wilfully separate from the Church are thereby guilty of sin, finds emphatic expression in the writings of later Fathers and Theologians. A few quotations may be given in illustration :—

Irenæus says, “ The spiritual man will also judge those who work divisions, vain men, devoid of the love of God, seeking their own advantage more than the unity of the Church ; who for trifling, nay for any, causes, rend and divide the great and glorious Body of Christ, and as far as in them lies slay it ; who speak peace and work warfare ; who truly strain at the gnat and swallow the camel ; for no improvement can be made by them so great as is the evil of schism.”<sup>3</sup>

S. Cyprian in his treatise *De Unitate* has many strong passages, of which let one suffice : “ Whosoever, divorced from the Church, is united to an adulteress, is separated from the Church’s promises ; nor shall that man attain the rewards of Christ who relinquishes His Church. He is a stranger, he is profane, he is an enemy. . . . He who assembles, except with the Church, scatters the Church of Christ.”<sup>4</sup>

Against the Donatists who seceded from the Church on the Puritan ground that it contained an admixture of evil men, S. Augustine argues by setting forth the unjustifiable character of separation for any such reason : “ The good are not to be deserted on account of the evil, but the evil are to be tolerated on account of the good, as the prophets tolerated those against whom they spake such great things ; nor did they relinquish communion in Sacraments with the people ; as

<sup>1</sup> Sim. viii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Sim. ix. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *Adv. Hær.* IV. xxxiii.

<sup>4</sup> *De Unitate*, p. 254.

our Lord Himself tolerated Judas unto his deserved end . . . and as the Apostles tolerated those who preached Christ through envy."<sup>1</sup>

Even in the general unsettlement and the widespread departure from old principles and traditions that mark the Ecclesiastical history of the sixteenth century we find in the writings of some of the Reforming leaders, where perhaps we should scarcely expect them, clear and emphatic statements as to the unjustifiable nature of departure from the communion of the visible Church. Calvin plainly declares: "A departure from the visible Church is a denial of God and of Christ; wherefore we must beware of so wicked a dissent, because when we are attempting, so far as in us lies, the ruin of God's truth, we deserve to be crushed beneath the thunders of His extremest wrath. Nor can any more atrocious crime be imagined than the violation, by sacrilegious perfidy, of that marriage which the only-begotten Son of God has deigned to contract with us."<sup>2</sup> The same writer also affirms that a Church which has a pure ministry of the Word and Sacraments "is never to be rejected as long as it persists in them, although otherwise it abounds in faults. Moreover, somewhat of corruption might creep into the administration of the Sacraments themselves, which ought not to alienate us from its communion."<sup>3</sup> In a letter to Farel, again, Calvin writes: "As for the union which I advised, there is no reason why you should be so adverse to it; for I avowed that there was nothing I wished for more than, as far as was possible, that all the pious might withdraw from that side. This one thing I strove to work for, that they might not schismatically divide any Church whatsoever, which, however it might be very corrupt in morals, and infected with outlandish doctrine, had not cut itself off entire from that doctrine, upon which Paul teaches the Church of Christ to be founded."<sup>4</sup> In support of this position, evidently an unpopular one with some of his friends and followers, the Reformer appeals to the example

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* xciii. tom ii. p. 237. Benedictine edition. <sup>2</sup> *Institutes*, IV. i. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Institutes*, IV. i. 12. <sup>4</sup> *Calvin's Letters*, vol. i. p. 93, ed. Bonnet.



of the Lord. "I wish to testify that no other union of the brethren was recommended by me than what is pointed out to us by the example of Christ, Who, notwithstanding their deplorable impiety, did not scruple to unite with Jews in participating in the mysteries of God."<sup>1</sup> From a study of the original records of the period it is manifest that the Continental Reformers, both Saxon and Swiss, separated from outward communion with the Church of Rome, and abandoned episcopacy, not lightly, but with the greatest unwillingness, and only in face, as it seemed to them, of sternest necessity. Melancthon, the Lutheran leader, declares that at the Diet of Augsburg he and his party repeatedly testified that they did "most anxiously desire to preserve the Ecclesiastical polity and the degrees of office which have been created in the Church, even by human authority."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Calvin's Letters*, vol. i. p. 93, ed. Bonnet.

<sup>2</sup> *Apol. Augsburg Confession*, VII. xiv. 23, 24.



## CHAPTER V

### THE CHURCH HOLY

THE Church is called Holy in the first place for this reason, that she is claimed by God and belongs specially to Him as His peculiar treasure.<sup>1</sup> Whatsoever, or whomsoever, God in any way claims for Himself becomes, in virtue of the Divine claim, separated and distinct from common or ordinary things, and invested with a certain sacredness by reason of its dedication, so that it is called Holy, the word being used as a fitting expression of that reverence which is due from man to all that pertains to the All-holy God. The place where God manifests Himself man instinctively approaches with reverence, and speaks of it as a holy place. When God revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush the command was given from Heaven, "Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."<sup>2</sup> Again, at the Theophany at Sinai the mountain where the Divine presence was manifested was strictly guarded from the approach of man or beast.<sup>3</sup> The Tabernacle, set apart for the service of Jehovah, and where He was worshipped by sacrifice, is commonly called in Scripture the Holy Place, and the innermost sanctuary is named the Holy of Holies.<sup>4</sup> Later in Hebrew history Mount Zion, which God chose, to put His Name there, is reverently spoken of as His "Holy Mountain."<sup>5</sup> As the place chosen by

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i. 14; 1 S. Peter ii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. iii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Exod. xix. 12, 13.

<sup>4</sup> *E.g.* Exod. xxviii. 29; xxxvi. 1, 3.

<sup>5</sup> *E.g.* Ps. ii. 6; iii. 4; xlviii. 1.

Jehovah and set apart for His worship is thus naturally revered by man, so too the days or seasons appointed for observance by Divine command are also known as holy seasons.<sup>1</sup> On the same principle the men whom God chooses to draw nigh to Himself in the priestly office are set apart with solemn rites of consecration and accounted holy to the Lord.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the whole nation of Israel, as being called into a special Covenant relation with God, and chosen by Him to be a nation of priests, is in Scripture called a holy people;<sup>3</sup> the Hebrew religion is summed up in the Divine command "Be ye holy, for I am holy, saith the LORD."<sup>4</sup> Now in the New Testament Dispensation is the fulfilment and realisation of that which was typically set forth in Old Testament institutions. The Body of Christians—the Church—is the Temple of God, specially chosen for the indwelling of His Holy Spirit, set apart for Him, and therefore to be revered as Holy.<sup>5</sup> Again, in another view, the Church of Christ has succeeded to the privileges and titles of the Israel of God;<sup>6</sup> Christians are, even in a higher sense than Israel of old, called into special relation with God and claimed by Him, so that to the Church belong in their fullest sense those glorious titles—"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people."<sup>7</sup> In view of such passages in the New Testament as those to which we have here referred we may say that, in the first place, the word Holy is applied to the Church, and rightly with Scripture warrant, as a general expression of the reverence due to her on account of God's special claim upon her, and because of the intimate relation into which her members are brought with Him.

But if "Holy" as applied to the Church of Christ is

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* Exod. xvi. 23; Lev. xxv. 12; Neh. viii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. xxi. 6; Num. xvi. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Exod. xix. 6; Num. xvi. 3; Deut. vii. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Lev. xi. 44; xix. 2; xx. 7.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16.

<sup>6</sup> Gal. vi. 16.

<sup>7</sup> 1 S. Peter ii. 9; cf. Rev. i. 6; Eph. i. 14.

primarily an expression of reverence for her, as separated to the service of God in obedience to His claim, it is further plain that we cannot regard it as a mere empty title, devoid of significance as far as the character of the Church herself is concerned. On the contrary, in whomsoever, or whatsoever, God draws near to Himself He requires freedom from spot or blemish. The regulations of the Old Covenant with respect to the freedom from blemish requisite in the victims sacrificed to God,<sup>1</sup> and the elaborate ceremonial purification necessary for Aaron and his sons before they could draw nigh to God in the priestly office,<sup>2</sup> testify to the Divine demand. Again, when God claimed the people Israel as His own possession, and separated them from the world as a nation of priests, the Divine claim carried with it a call to active holiness: "Ye shall be holy, for I, the LORD your God, am holy."<sup>3</sup> So in the New Testament, that Christians are called to be holy, in the sense of consecrated to God, carries with it a vocation to become fit for that service to which they are devoted. Thus S. Peter takes up and expands the Old Testament exhortation, "As He Which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Ye shall be holy, for I am holy."<sup>4</sup> S. Paul, too, in the title by which he salutes his readers in more than one Epistle—"called to be saints"<sup>5</sup>—implies that the call to membership in the Church of God is at the same time a call to holiness of life; a truth to which he elsewhere gives direct expression, "God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."<sup>6</sup> "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification;"<sup>7</sup> and again to Timothy the same Apostle writes that God "hath called us with a holy calling . . . according to His own purpose."<sup>8</sup> The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, too, addresses the "partakers of the heavenly calling" as "holy brethren."<sup>9</sup>

Further, this call to holiness is no vain and idle one. We

<sup>1</sup> Lev. i. 3, 10; iv. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xxix. 1-37.

<sup>3</sup> Lev. xix. 2.

<sup>4</sup> 1 S. Peter i. 15, 16.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 2.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 7.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 3.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Tim. i. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Heb. iii. 1.

may be sure that God does not mock those whom He calls into His Church by solemnly making a demand which, in the nature of things, it is impossible that they should ever be able to fulfil. To suppose any such thing would be indeed to reduce the Divine action to mere trifling and foolishness. On the contrary, to whom God gives the call, to them also He gives the power to realise it. Not only does He, by claiming the Church for Himself and setting apart its members for His service, call men thereby to holiness, but He at the same time endows them in virtue of their membership in His Church, with power to realise the holy calling. God "hath called us with an holy calling . . . according to His own purpose and *grace which was given us in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"<sup>1</sup> Those whom God adds to the Church from time to time are being saved from their sins.<sup>2</sup> To them, as believers in Christ, is given a power to become sons of God.<sup>3</sup> The Sacrament of initiation into the Church is itself a laver of Regeneration,<sup>4</sup> a death, with Christ, to sin, and a rising again to a new life of righteousness, through the power of the risen Lord.<sup>5</sup> The other great Sacrament ordained by Christ is a continual renewing and strengthening of the union between Him and His people, so that He dwells in them and they in Him;<sup>6</sup> they receive of His fulness and grace for grace.<sup>7</sup> Thus it is God's purpose that they whom He calls shall be sanctified,<sup>8</sup> that they—presenting themselves a living, holy, sacrifice—shall be transformed,<sup>9</sup> and shall advance in holiness until Christ be fully formed in them,<sup>10</sup> until they attain the measure of the stature of Christ.<sup>11</sup> This being so, holiness is even now, here on earth, exhibited in varying degrees in the lives of individual Christians. In obedience to the Lord's command a light does shine before men from the Church, and they see her good works.<sup>12</sup> The Body is, in virtue of its Divine endowment of grace, holy, and each member, since he shares

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. i. 9.<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 47.<sup>3</sup> S. John i. 12.<sup>4</sup> Tit. iii. 5.<sup>5</sup> Rom. vi. 4.<sup>6</sup> S. John vi. 56.<sup>7</sup> S. John i. 16.<sup>8</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 3.<sup>9</sup> Rom. xii. 1, 2.<sup>10</sup> Gal. iv. 19.<sup>11</sup> Eph. iv. 13.<sup>12</sup> S. Matt. v. 16.

the gifts and graces which belong to the Body, is partaker of that holiness. Hence in the New Testament *ἅγιοι*—saints, holy ones—a name which in the Old Testament stands for the pure angels of the Most High,<sup>1</sup> is one of the commonest and most characteristic designations of baptized Christians as such,<sup>2</sup> and transformation of character is set forth as the normal consequence of admission into the Church: "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."<sup>3</sup>

Holiness, like unity,<sup>4</sup> is an ideal at once revealed, but not yet fully realised by the Church Militant. Hence in the members of the Church on earth, though by God's grace many are advancing towards holiness, yet there are still faults and imperfections. Some members, with shame and sorrow we have to confess, may be hypocrites and unfaithful to their high calling. Yet this admixture of evil or unworthy members does not destroy the essential character of God's Church, any more than the presence of the traitor Judas destroyed the holy character of the Apostolic company chosen by the Lord Himself. Fully aware of the presence of the traitor the Lord pronounced, "Ye are clean, but not all."<sup>5</sup> That the Church's essential holiness does not carry with it absolute freedom from admixture of unworthy members is also very clearly set forth by S. Paul. We may take the first Epistle to the Corinthians as furnishing an unmistakable proof. The Apostle addresses the letter "to the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints."<sup>6</sup> Yet it was of these same Corinthian Christians

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* Deut. xxxiii. 2; Ps. lxxxix. 5, 7.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* 1 Cor. vi. 1, 2; xiv. 33.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 9-11; cf. i. 30.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> S. John xiii. 10.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. i. 2.

that it had been declared to S. Paul that there were contentions among them.<sup>1</sup> He is constrained to speak to their shame in the matter of going to law before the unbelievers, and to charge them with fault in this respect.<sup>2</sup> There was even fornication amongst them, such as is not so much as named among the Gentiles,<sup>3</sup> and though steps are taken, under S. Paul's direction, for the removal of the incestuous offender, yet it is quite clear that, at the time of writing his first Epistle, the Apostle did not regard the Corinthian Church as apostate, or as not being a true Church of God, on account of the presence of this notorious sinner in its communion. Any admixture of evil members in God's Holy Church does at first sight seem anomalous, and has proved a stumbling-block to some minds from very early times, leading some to separate from the historic Church because of faults and shortcomings they detected in it, and to seek to create a Church *de novo*, which here and now should be absolutely and literally holy, under the impression that only such a society could be a true Church of God. But those who have so acted have fallen into error, and have in fact altogether misunderstood the function that God intends His Church should fulfil in the world. As early as the middle of the third century the Novatians appear as the first systematic exponents of the Puritan tendency in Theology, and indeed they were the first to use the name Puritan, calling themselves *καθαροί*—the Pure. Their fundamental principle was that the Church, as a Communion of saints, as a society of thoroughly pure members, should never endure the presence of impure ones within its pale, and it was upon this principle that they held and practised that the Church has no right to absolve such as have fallen into grievous sin after Baptism. A like Puritan conception of the Church underlay the Donatist schism which so sorely vexed the Church of North Africa in the fourth century. The same tendency, too, is apparent in the teaching of our own Wycliffe (d. 1384), who followed the Donatists in the opinion that no bishop

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 11 ; xi. 18.    <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 5-7.    <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. v. 1.



or priest who is in a state of mortal sin can perform the actions pertaining to his office. But the Puritan error received its greatest impulse in the sixteenth century, when it was adopted and fanatically propagated by the Anabaptists at the period of the Reformation. These sectaries unchurched the historic Church, and even the Church of the Reformers, on account of the wickedness they perceived in some members, and holding that that is not a true Church of Christ in which any sinners are found, set themselves to form a new community, in which the attribute of holiness should be (they deemed) literally and perfectly realised at once. Our English Puritans went upon the same theory, and, amongst modern sects, the Baptists are the spiritual descendants of the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century. Maintaining that the true Church consists only of those whose lives are visibly holy, their separation from the historic Church is grounded on the charge that she contains an admixture of evil members. Therefore they have seceded with the idea of forming a perfectly pure society of saints in which no sinner is to find a place, so that holiness—or at any rate the outward profession of holiness, which is all that can be demanded, since man cannot read the heart—instead of being that to which men are trained in the Church of God, is made by them a necessary qualification for entrance into it. Until men are able for themselves individually to make such profession, they are not considered as fit subjects for Baptism; those, therefore, who having been baptized in infancy with the Church's Baptism, in later life join their sect, are by them, consistently with their theory, rebaptized.

The Puritan error, which is, as we have seen, a very old one, might surely have been guarded against, or avoided altogether, by keeping in mind the impressive parables by which our Lord illustrated the nature and characteristics of the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom is by Him likened to a net cast into the sea, which gathered *of every kind*,<sup>1</sup> and to a feast at the marriage of a King's son, to which his

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xiii. 47.



servants gathered together *all, as many as they found, both bad and good.*<sup>1</sup> Christ seems, moreover, to give a special warning against the very error we have been considering in the parable of the tares, when He makes the owner of the field forbid his servants, who were distressed at the presence of the tares amongst the good wheat, to root out the tares, with the express injunction, "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat also with them."<sup>2</sup> As has been already shown, God, when He claims men for His own possession and calls them into His Church, calls them to holiness and gives them power to attain to it. But those whom He thus calls into the Church are sinners. It is the mission of the Church to carry on in the world the work of Christ, Who came "not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."<sup>3</sup> Sanctity of life, therefore, is not a preliminary condition, to be required of all those who are admitted into the Church, but is a high estate to which God designs that men should be trained and educated, with the help of all the means of grace which are provided for sinners in His Church. To keep sinners outside the Church until they can produce evidence of holiness, is wrongfully to deprive struggling souls of the very aids and means through which holiness might be attained by them through God's grace. The Puritan error is thus seen to involve a complete distortion of the whole idea and function of the Church in the world. It is not a select society of such as are, previous to their incorporation, already holy, but it is, in the wisdom of God, intended to be inclusive and not exclusive, a great missionary and educational society; not for those who are independently (presumed to be) holy, but to train sinners to holiness. The Church is designed to be "the salt of the earth";<sup>4</sup> to act as the organ of redemption in a corrupt world. It is obvious that admixture, in such a society, of members in whom there may be much evil as yet unsubdued, furnishes no proof that the Church lacks holiness, much less can it destroy her essential

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xxii. 10.<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xiii. 29.<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. ix. 13.<sup>4</sup> S. Matt. v. 13.

character, tendency, and aim. On the contrary, if it proves anything, it testifies rather that the Church is nobly persevering in her great Mission, carrying on the work of her Head, by providing sinners with the means of recovery, and putting holiness within the reach of all. To make her reception of sinners and forbearance with them a ground of objection against the Church, is surely to act like those men who murmured against the Master as "a friend of publicans and sinners."<sup>1</sup> "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them."<sup>2</sup>

Finally, it being the Church's work, and indeed the very reason of her existence, to save sinners and lead them to holiness, she is rightly called Holy for this reason, in addition to the others already mentioned—because of her destiny. Amidst, and in spite of, all difficulties and drawbacks both from without and within, she tends towards a sure goal, she leads men towards an ideal which, we have the Divine promise for it, shall be realised. Her time of struggle and probation over, all evil triumphantly vanquished, she shall be presented to Christ as a Bride adorned for her Husband,<sup>3</sup> a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; holy and without blemish.<sup>4</sup> Kept by God's grace from falling, her members shall be presented faultless before the presence of the Divine glory with exceeding joy.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xi. 19.

<sup>2</sup> S. Luke xv. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xxi. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. v. 27.

<sup>5</sup> S. Jude 24.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CHURCH CATHOLIC

IT would be difficult, if not impossible, to say when the attribute *Catholic* first found its place in the formal profession of faith of each several part of the Church, but it does not appear to have become everywhere established until the seventh century.<sup>1</sup> While the Church in Africa apparently had not yet accepted it in the sixth century, we nevertheless find it in some Western Creeds as early as the fourth century, and it had been contained in practically all Eastern Creeds in still earlier times.<sup>2</sup>

We have now to ask what is implied in this name Catholic. The simple meaning of the Greek word is *Universal*, and our first impulse perhaps would be to answer that the name refers to the local extension of the Church everywhere throughout the known world. This explanation is especially suggested to us English Churchmen by the verse in the *Te Deum*: "The Holy Church *throughout all the world* doth acknowledge Thee." It requires, however, but little reflection to show us that, thus explained, the name Catholic is not strictly true to fact. Even yet, after so many centuries of missionary enterprise, the Church does not literally extend everywhere, and of course the name Catholic (in this sense of universal local extension) would apply still less exactly to the Church in those days when it had subjugated to the faith of Christ only a small part of the

<sup>1</sup> See HEURTLEY, *Earlier Formularies of Faith*, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ZAHN, *The Articles of the Apostles' Creed*, in *The Expositor*, May, 1898, p. 393.

Roman Empire. Yet it was in those very days, when the limits of the Church were comparatively small as far as territory is concerned, that the name Catholic first began to be applied to it. We must evidently look for some deeper reason for the name than the mere external possession of the kingdoms of the world by the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ.

The earliest extant examples of the expression "Catholic Church" date from the first quarter of the second century, and are to be found in the Epistle of S. Ignatius of Antioch to the Smyrnæans, and in the letter of the Church of Smyrna giving an account of the martyrdom of S. Polycarp. S. Ignatius writes: "Wherever the Bishop shall appear, there let the people be; even as where Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church,"<sup>1</sup> meaning that the Bishop stands for and represents in each local Church what Christ is to the Church as a whole. The Smyrnæan Christians, in the superscription of their letter, send greeting not only to the immediate recipients but "to all the sojourners of the Holy and Catholic Church in every place."<sup>2</sup> Again, in the same book Polycarp before his martyrdom is said to have made mention in his prayer of "the Catholic Church throughout all the world,"<sup>3</sup> and Christ in another place is called "the Shepherd of the Catholic Church throughout the world."<sup>4</sup> In these passages the term "Catholic Church" apparently stands for the whole body of baptized believers as contrasted with single communities; but that the word does not in itself signify literal local extension everywhere is clearly apparent from the continual recurrence of some additional phrase to express this latter idea—such as "*in every place*"—"throughout the world." The sense in which the epithet Catholic is used in these early writings is even more plainly apparent in another passage of this same letter of the Smyrnæans where Polycarp is spoken of as "Bishop of the Catholic Church that is at Smyrna,"<sup>5</sup> which

<sup>1</sup> *Epistle to the Smyrnæans*, viii.

<sup>2</sup> *Martyrdom of Polycarp*. The opening salutation.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* viii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* xix.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* xvi.

reads at first sight like a contradiction in terms, but which suggests to us the true signification of the term we are discussing. In such a sentence "Catholic" is evidently an adjective denoting some quality belonging to the nature or essence of the Church as a whole, the possession of which same quality is naturally and necessarily found to characterise each local community of Christians.

The conclusion to which we are led by a study of the earliest known examples of its application to the Church are exactly borne out by a consideration of the form of the Greek word "Catholic" itself. The idea of the Church universally extended throughout the world would not be naturally expressed by the adjective "Catholic" (*καθολική*), but rather by the phrase *ἡ καθόλου ἐκκλησία*, or by the addition of such a clause as *κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην* (throughout the world). The termination of the adjective strictly signifies "having the character of" or "possessing the capacity for," and the word is therefore properly descriptive not of the outward circumstances, but of the nature or inner character of the Church, and denotes that it has been so Divinely constituted as to have the character of, and possess the capacity for, universality.

This character was stamped upon the Church at the outset by the *Universal Mission* it expressly received from the Divine Head Himself. We may recall that our Lord incidentally spoke of His Gospel as to be proclaimed in the whole world,<sup>1</sup> but, not to dwell upon this, His final charge is emphatic and unmistakable: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature";<sup>2</sup> "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations."<sup>3</sup>

It is thus fitting that the clause "I believe in . . . the Catholic Church" should find a place in the Creed of the Christian, because the Catholicity of the Church is properly an object of faith, for by the name Catholic we express our belief in the Universal Mission of the Church and in its adaptation to the needs of all men in all ages of the world's history. Christ would not have sent His Gospel into all the

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xxvi. 13.    <sup>2</sup> S. Mark xvi. 15.    <sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

world unless it were adapted to mankind in general. The Hebrew religion contained Divine truth indeed, but given under a form suited for the special training of one particular race, and adapted to the needs of human nature in the earlier stages of its religious education; hence Judaism has always been local, and is now effete. But for the Christian faith we claim that "every foreign country is its home";<sup>1</sup> that it is able perfectly to satisfy the needs of man, whether considered as an individual, or in relation to his fellows; that it is essentially fitted to guide him through the changing circumstances of personal and social growth, able to bring forth from itself new resources for new requirements, able to reveal thoughts out of many hearts and to meet them with answers of wider knowledge. But in order to draw out the full significance of this name Catholic we must press our inquiry further and ask, Whence is this perfect sympathy of the Church with all that is truly human? Whence this universal adaptation of the faith of Christ to the needs of mankind? As we review history we see that successive ages and diverse nations or tribes have had their several religions; religions of local growth, meeting local needs; some of them perhaps doing their work more or less well for a time, by reason of the fragments of Divine Truth inculcated, and then passing away. Christianity too, we are sometimes told, should be classed with other world-religions. We are able to trace the local circumstances of its origin, and some may be found to affirm that it has done its work, that its central dogmas rest upon effete fables, destined to pass away before the advance of culture and education. But Christians have always striven, and still strive, to fulfil the Mission received from the Master. We find the Apostles claiming, as S. Paul does, that the Gospel is being preached "to every creature under Heaven,"<sup>2</sup> that it is "in all the world"<sup>3</sup> and that the voice of those who proclaim the good news of Christ is as far-reaching as the light of the heavenly bodies whose "sound has gone forth

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. to Diognetus*, cap. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Col. i. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Col. i. 6.



into all lands and their words unto the end of the world.”<sup>1</sup> From its birthday at Pentecost to this day the Church has been, by the very law of its being, a Missionary Society. Christianity could not be content when the image of Christ stood side by side with that of Apollo, or of Jupiter, in the Pantheon at Rome. Its claims are not to be satisfied with recognition from the world-power as a *religio licita* side by side with other systems, but it must be supreme. Christians can know no rest until all own allegiance to the Lord Christ, for “in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”<sup>2</sup>

But, to pursue our inquiry, why have Christians thus always refused to class their religion with others? Why does the Church affirm that there is none other Name than that of Jesus under Heaven, given among men, whereby we may be saved,<sup>3</sup> and, strong in this assurance, seek to bring every creature to the discipleship of Christ? Why do we still maintain that the Church, and the Church alone, can satisfy all the manifold needs of humanity? Why, to put the question in other words, do we call the Church Catholic? Because of our faith in the *universality of the Truth she bears*. Because she is entrusted with, and sets forth to the nations, *all necessary revealed Truth*, having received from Heaven the Lord’s promised dower of the Holy Spirit to guide her “*into all the truth*.”<sup>4</sup> She has been specially commissioned by the Lord to teach men everywhere the observance of *all things* that He has commanded,<sup>5</sup> and her ministers have been entrusted from Heaven with “*all the words* of this life.”<sup>6</sup> From the days of the ministry of the Apostles themselves it has always been at once the Church’s glory and the very purpose of her mission to declare to

<sup>1</sup> Rom. x. 18, where S. Paul is quoting from Ps. xix. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. ii. 10, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Acts iv. 12.

<sup>4</sup> S. John xvi. 13.

<sup>5</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

<sup>6</sup> Acts v. 20.

men "*all the counsel of God.*"<sup>1</sup> Thus, whether her territorial limits be narrow or broad, the Church is in her inner character, in the proper sense, Catholic. By reason of her being entrusted with the full Revelation of God and of the Divine will, that she may declare it to men, the Church of Christ is essentially fitted and destined to be all things to all men.

Now a misconception might here arise. It might be asked: If the Church is thus commissioned with all truth, if it is inherently fitted to be all things to all men, does this imply that its teaching is "broad" in such a way as to be vague and indefinite? On this supposition the idea underlying the time-honoured title of Catholic is fitly expressed by the modern word "undenominational," and, in fact, at the present day we find that the terms are regarded by some as synonymous and interchangeable.

But, as has been shown, the ground of the Church's universal adaptation to the needs and aspirations of humanity lies in the fact that it holds in trust, to set forth to the world the full Revelation of God and of His will for man. Human nature was made in the Divine image, designed to live a life of communion with God, and endowed with capacities that nothing short of God Himself can ever truly satisfy; so that, however far man may have fallen, he still has his ideals, his aspirations after the Divine, and the Church is Catholic just because she, and she alone, can bring to man that which he most needs and yearns after, viz. "clear light and true knowledge of God and of His Son Jesus Christ;"<sup>2</sup> a full revelation of God which means nothing less than eternal life to man;<sup>3</sup> a revelation in the light of which lies salvation from sin and power to live a happy, because truly natural, life in the service of God. Therefore *the Church's universal adaptation must depend upon its faithfulness to Divine Truth received.* Hence by the Catholic Church we mean the Church which proclaims to the world the

<sup>1</sup> Acts xx. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Proper Preface for Whitsunday.

<sup>3</sup> S. John xvii. 3.

Revelation Christ came to bring, the Truth as it is in Jesus. This Truth, which is the subject-matter of the Church's preaching, is not merely a system of morals or code of ethics, such as the Mosaic Law, or the Qoran of Mohammed, for in that case it might become out of date and would be liable to revision; it might not be suited for all men, nor adapted to all ages, and in such case could not be Catholic. But the message of the Church is Catholic, for it is inexhaustible and unchangeable, being the proclamation of the great facts of a perfect human life, full of tender love and sympathy for man as man, and at the same time full of Divine grace and truth.<sup>1</sup> The message of Christianity to the world is unique. It is not only moral teaching, nor is it only the holding forth for imitation of a Great Example, though it is both these in their due place, but it is before all things *life*. Christ said, "I am"—not I declare, or I point to—but "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."<sup>2</sup> The Christian Revelation is summed up in the Person of Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

" . . . The Word had breath and wrought,  
With human hands, the Creed of creeds  
In loveliness of perfect deeds  
More strong than all poetic thought."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. John i. 14.

<sup>2</sup> S. John xiv. 6.

<sup>3</sup> In this connexion there should be noted the almost total absence of reference to our Lord's discourses in the sermons and letters of the Apostles embodied in the New Testament. Only one saying of the Lord is quoted by S. Paul (Acts xx. 35), and besides this we have in the Pauline Epistles only two direct appeals to Christ's teaching: (*a*) on the subject of divorce (1 Cor. vii. 10), and (*b*) as to the maintenance of Christian ministers (1 Cor. ix. 14, cf. 1 Tim. v. 18; S. Luke x. 7). Perhaps we may find also in Rom. xii. 14 a reminiscence of the Sermon on the Mount (S. Matt. v. 44; S. Luke vi. 28). But the essence of the Gospel lies, in S. Paul's view, in the proclamation of the great facts of the personal life of Jesus. At Athens the subject of the Apostle's preaching is stated to have been "Jesus and the Resurrection" (Acts xvii. 18), and he himself thus summarised his Gospel as preached to the Corinthians: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4).

<sup>4</sup> TENNYSON, *In Memoriam*.

This being so, the Catholicity of the Church's message depends upon her faithfulness to the Revelation of God in Christ; it is bound up with her adherence to S. Peter's confession of faith in Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God."<sup>1</sup> This faith is the rock upon which the spiritual fabric of the Church rests, and upon it the Lord Himself declared that He would build His Church.<sup>2</sup> If this faith be surrendered the Christian religion sinks down to the level of other and merely human systems; like them it must then become partial and local, failing to appeal to man as man, and forfeiting its Catholic character. That this has in fact happened may be shown by historical illustration. Arianism, specious though it may sometimes have appeared, does in fact surrender the very essence of the Christian Gospel, and we find accordingly that though, humanly speaking, everything must have seemed in its favour, though numerous creeds of an Arian type were circulated by Christian bishops, though it enjoyed the patronage of Emperors like Constantius and Valens—to say nothing of Constantine himself—yet, in spite of all this, Arianism failed to become a Catholic Religion.

Catholic therefore means *Orthodox*—teaching the one faith "once for all delivered to the saints."<sup>3</sup> In an oft-quoted passage of S. Cyril of Jerusalem this meaning is brought out. The Church is called Catholic, says S. Cyril, "because it is throughout the world, from one end of the earth to the other; and because it teaches universally (*καθολικῶς*) and completely, one and all, the doctrines which ought to come to man's knowledge."<sup>4</sup> We have seen already that the second of S. Cyril's reasons underlies his first. The Church is Catholic, in the sense of extended over the world, just because and in so far as she teaches all necessary revealed truth; because she holds and preaches the one faith. Calvin gives, in effect, the same explanation of the term Catholic as applied to the Church: "The universal Church is a multitude gathered out of all nations, which though divided and dispersed by distance

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 16.<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 18.<sup>3</sup> S. Jude 3.<sup>4</sup> *Catech. Lectures*, xviii. 23.

of place, yet *agreeth to the one true and Divine doctrine*, and is united by the bond of a common religion.”<sup>1</sup> Having realised that Catholic implies orthodox, we are able to understand how it is that the attribute can be rightly applied, as it has been from very early times, not only to the whole Church extended throughout the world, but also to a local Church, to the body of Christians in a single city, or even to an individual Christian man. When we speak of the Catholic Church in such a place, or when we speak of such a man as a Catholic, we so speak of them as holding the one faith, the possession and proclamation of which gives to the Church its capacity of Catholicity.

We might perhaps be inclined to imagine that this use of the term Catholic, as equivalent to Orthodox, is a later development of meaning. But the evidence at our command shows that such is not the case. It is remarkable that in one of the very earliest extant documents in which the word Catholic is used of the Church we find an instance of its application in this sense to a single local community. We have already had occasion to quote from the passage in question; it occurs in the letter of the Smyrnæans giving an account of the martyrdom of S. Polycarp, where the martyr is spoken of as “Bishop of the Catholic Church that is at Smyrna.”<sup>2</sup> Thus the use of the name Catholic *as a badge of Orthodox Confession* is, so far as we can tell, as old as the application of the term to the Church, and dates at least as far back as the earlier half of the second century, because we find it so used quite as a matter of course, without comment, remark, or explanation, in a work which cannot be later than the middle of that century.

But it may be felt by some that this use of the name Catholic seems altogether a perversion, and is an unfortunate mode of speech,<sup>3</sup> because it appears to bring an exclusive connotation into the word, which is the very antithesis of its proper meaning. At the bottom of this feeling there lies

<sup>1</sup> *Institutes*, IV. i. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Martyrdom of Polycarp*, xvi.

<sup>3</sup> So Zahn, in his article on “The Articles of the Apostles’ Creed” in *The Expositor*, May, 1898, p. 394.

an altogether unwarrantable confusion of Orthodoxy with narrowness. Though it may be unfortunately true that Orthodox Churchmen have sometimes contributed to this confusion by their mental attitude and conduct, any antithesis between Orthodoxy and liberality of thought, or breadth of view, is essentially false. On the contrary, it is the Catholic—meaning by Catholic the Orthodox—Church which, more than any other society or system, has brought and brings to men the element of true breadth and freedom, in thought as in action. The Catholic Church can afford to be, and in practice is, more tolerant than the sects are of diversities of opinion within her borders, and even of exaggerations of doctrine on the part of individual members or ministers. For it is plain to the student of history that the sects have built their separate existence upon the disproportionate emphasis of particular doctrines or practices. This is indeed the essence of heresy—the choosing out of some particular doctrine, which in itself is perhaps perfectly true and necessary, and which only becomes misleading, and issues in distortion or corruption of the faith when held or developed out of proportion, and to the exclusion of other equally necessary truths. Thus, *e.g.*, the Baptists have exaggerated the importance of a particular ritual of Baptism, while some sects, like the Wesleyans, have attached undue prominence to a particular theory of the place of Conversion in the Christian life. As a practical result each of such communities is strictly jealous for its own particular dogma. In order to maintain its separate existence at all it is bound to discourage, if not stifle, any attempts on the part of its adherents to give prominence to other, and not less necessary, truths.

But with the Catholic Church it is otherwise. She holds all necessary revealed Truth according to the proportion of the faith. She realises that Divine Truth is many-sided; that Christian doctrine is not to be deduced by rigid logic from one or two truths, ignoring other complementary truths, as Calvin evolved his system of Theology from the central truth of the absolute sovereignty of God, passing over other Divine



attributes, and giving no place to the complementary truth of man's free will. "Perhaps," says S. Augustine, "the Church is called Catholic for this reason, that she holds truly the whole of the truth, some parts of which are found in various heresies." The reason the great Doctor suggests is indeed a true one. The proportion of the faith is maintained, not by exclusion, but by comprehension, on the broad basis of Holy Scripture and the Creeds. The Church knows that there are different aspects of Truth, and that men's minds are so constituted that while some, by temperament and training, are disposed to look more on the objective side, others again are disposed rather to regard the subjective side of religion. She recognises that while some are impressed chiefly by the great functions of the Christian Society, others, on the other hand, are constrained to dwell most on the spiritual needs of the individual. Knowing and recognising that there must be differences of view such as these, the Church allows her individual members, within very large limits, to speak their own minds. There may be diversities of gifts, but it is the same Spirit that worketh in all,<sup>1</sup> and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.<sup>2</sup> The Church can bear with her teachers, even in their exaggerations; she can encourage them to speak, each one of those things that he doth know, because she herself, as One Body, holds in due balance and proportion the full Revelation of Divine Truth; and this is secured to her by her possession of unbroken Catholic tradition embodied in the Creeds, and by the written letter of Scripture, which is the anchor of tradition. The Church can deal gently with fervent utterances, or with occasional partial statements, on the part of her sons, because both behind and before them there lies the living voice of the Church, the general consent of the whole Body, and she has firm faith that by an unfailing instinct, which is the gift of the Spirit of Truth, this consent of the Church as a whole rejects, and will always reject, all that is not the very Truth of God.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 4, 6.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 17.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CHURCH APOSTOLIC

THE Church is Apostolic because of her Mission; and the Mission of the Church, the Body of Christ, is one and the same with the Mission of her Divine Head. Christ Himself, for us men and for our salvation, was sent into the world by the Father. He proceeded and came forth from God; He came not of Himself, but the Father sent (ἀπέστειλε) Him.<sup>1</sup> The sense of His Mission was ever present with Him and sustained Him throughout His earthly life and work. "My meat," He said, "is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work,"<sup>2</sup> and we cannot doubt that His cry upon the Cross, "It is finished,"<sup>3</sup> was the expression of the satisfaction of His human soul that He had been true to that Mission, and had perfectly accomplished the work for which He was sent.<sup>4</sup> Very many are the references that He makes to this Mission in His discourses with His disciples, and more than thirty of these may be counted in the Gospel according to S. John.

It is thus altogether in accordance with our Lord's utterances concerning Himself that, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, He is called the Apostle of our profession.<sup>5</sup> Justin Martyr also, in his first *Apology*, notes that Christ is rightly thus entitled. "The Son of God," he says, "is also called Angel and Apostle," adding by way of explanation, "for He Himself delivers as a messenger (ἀπαγγέλλει) whatever ought to be known, and is sent as an Apostle (ἀποστέλλεται) to make

<sup>1</sup> S. John viii. 42; cf. Gal. iv. 4.

<sup>2</sup> S. John iv. 34.

<sup>3</sup> S. John xix. 30.      <sup>4</sup> S. John xvii. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. iii. 1.

known the message, even as our Lord Himself said, He that heareth Me, heareth Him that sent Me."<sup>1</sup>

Now, if Christ's Mission had ceased when His visible presence was withdrawn from earth, then the benefits of His Incarnation would have been lost to man. But this is very far from being the case. To His chosen band of twelve disciples it is recorded that the Lord Himself gave the name of Apostles,<sup>2</sup> for that same Mission with which He Himself had been entrusted He handed on to His disciples that it might be exercised through them. The terms in which He commissioned them are very express to this effect: "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you";<sup>3</sup> and other sayings of the Lord, recorded not by S. John alone, further emphasise the identity of the Mission of the Apostles with His own Mission from the Father: "He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth Me; and He that rejecteth Me rejecteth Him that sent Me";<sup>4</sup> and again: "He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me."<sup>5</sup> We find, too, S. Paul relating how that the Galatians had received him not merely as an angel or messenger from God, but even as Christ Jesus.<sup>6</sup> That Christ did not intend His Mission to cease at the Ascension, but Himself provided for its perpetuation through the Apostolic Ministry is further brought out by S. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians, where he connects the establishment and activity of the Ministry with the Ascension, regarding it as a gift bestowed by the Ascended Lord. When Christ "ascended up on high," he writes, "He gave gifts unto men . . . and He gave some to be Apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the Body of Christ."<sup>7</sup> The Church is thus called Apostolic as being endowed with the Mission of Christ.

<sup>1</sup> *Apology*, i. cap. 63.

<sup>2</sup> S. Luke vi. 13.

<sup>3</sup> S. John xx. 21.

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke x. 16.

<sup>5</sup> S. Matt. x. 40; cf. S. John xiii. 20.

<sup>6</sup> Gal. iv. 14.

<sup>7</sup> Eph. iv. 8-12.

It is a visible body, founded by Christ, in which, by means of an enduring Apostleship, established by the Lord, the Apostle of our profession, the works which He Himself wrought during His earthly life for the redemption and sanctification of mankind are, under the guidance of His Spirit, continued unto the end of the world.<sup>1</sup>

The evidence of the New Testament shows us that from the very beginning the Apostles took steps to provide for the continuance of, and to perpetuate, the Mission they themselves had received from Christ, by handing it on in their turn to others who should succeed them, and by organising the Ministry of the Church. The theory that the Apostolic office was intended to be merely temporary, that it was instituted to meet an extraordinary need, and destined to pass away like the prophetic office, is incapable of being reconciled with the action of the Apostles themselves. For we find first that the place of the traitor was filled by the election of Matthias,<sup>2</sup> then a little later SS. Paul and Barnabas are added to the ranks of the Apostles,<sup>3</sup> as well as others, some of whose names are known to us.<sup>4</sup> Further, we find S. James, the Lord's brother, acting with Apostolic authority at Jerusalem,<sup>5</sup> while in the Pastoral Epistles Timothy and Titus, at Ephesus and Crete respectively, appear as endued with Apostolic powers and authority equal to his own by S. Paul.<sup>6</sup> The Lord, in commissioning His Apostles, promised that He Himself would work with them even unto the end of the world,<sup>7</sup> and they, the original twelve, provided that while the world should last, while there was the work of spreading the Gospel still to be done, there should not be wanting Apostles with whom He might work according to His promise. S. Clement of Rome,

<sup>1</sup> MÖHLER, *Symbolism*, i. 5, 36.

<sup>2</sup> Acts i. 21-6.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xiv. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. xvi. 7. "Andronicus and Junias, who are of note among the Apostles," *i.e.* who are distinguished as Apostles. That the Apostolate was widely extended in the later years of the first century also appears from the evidence of *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*.

<sup>5</sup> Acts xii. 17; xv. 13; xxi. 18; Gal. ii. 12.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim. i. 3; Titus i. 5.

<sup>7</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

in his letter to the Corinthian Church, alludes to this provision by the Apostles for a succession in their Ministry. "Preaching through cities and countries," he says, "the Apostles appointed their first-fruits, having proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of them that should afterwards believe. . . . Our Apostles knew, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that strife should arise on account of the Ministry. For this cause, therefore, having had a perfect foreknowledge, they appointed persons, as before mentioned, and then gave direction that when they should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed to their ministry."<sup>1</sup> This handing on of their own Mission by the Apostles to the Ministry which they themselves constituted is regarded by Irenæus as amongst the very foundation principles of the Christian Religion, for he places the Ministry derived by succession from the Apostles side by side with such essentials as Apostolic doctrine, the preservation and right use of Scripture, and the grace of love.<sup>2</sup> Similarly S. Ignatius of Antioch testifies that where the Apostolic Ministry existed not there was reckoned to be no Church. "In like manner," he writes to the Trallians, "let all men respect the deacons as Jesus Christ, even as they should respect the bishop as being a type of the Father and the presbyters as the council of God and as the College of Apostles. Apart from these there is not even the name of a Church."<sup>3</sup> Quotations need not be multiplied, but sufficient has been said to show that Primitive evidence makes it plain that the Apostles provided a succession in their Ministry, and that the possession of the Ministry thus organised constituted the note of Apostolicity, and was regarded as an essential mark of a true Church of Christ.

<sup>1</sup> S. Clement of Rome, *1 Cor.* xlii. ; xlv.

<sup>2</sup> "The true knowledge is the doctrine of the Apostles and the ancient system of the Church throughout the world; and the character of the Body of Christ according to the successions of the Bishops to whom the Apostles delivered the Church which is in each place; the complete use of the Scriptures which have come down to us without corruption, receiving neither addition nor loss . . . and the pre-eminent gift of love."—IRENÆUS, *Adv. Her.* IV. xxxiii. 8.     <sup>3</sup> *Epistle to the Trallians*, iii.

Having seen that, as a matter of fact, the Apostles established and provided for the permanence of the Ministry of the Church, whereby their Mission might be extended and perpetuated, we may next take up a different standpoint and remark that, if we were to judge the matter *a priori*, we should expect the institution of a Ministry to be one of the characteristic features of the Church of God; and that on two grounds:—

(a) When we observe God's method of teaching mankind we note that He has regularly chosen to teach by means of the living voice of men. The inspired teaching which man has received on Divine Truth can always be traced to inspired men. "Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost."<sup>1</sup> In Israel under the Law it was the priest's lips that kept knowledge,<sup>2</sup> and God spake to His ancient people through the prophets, whose distinctive work was the oral proclamation of a Divinely revealed message. The culmination of God's Revelation of Himself to the world in the Incarnation furnishes the crowning example of the working of the principle in question. The Revelation of the Father came not in a dead letter but in the living Person of Jesus Christ, known and revered by His contemporaries as the great Teacher,<sup>3</sup> the Prophet who should come into the world.<sup>4</sup> "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son."<sup>5</sup> We have already had occasion to note that our Lord provided for the continuance of the same method, that He did not embody His teaching in a written record, but trained living men,<sup>6</sup> upon whom He poured forth the gift of the Holy Spirit, to lead them into all the truth,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 S. Peter i. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Mal. ii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> More than forty times the title Teacher (*διδάσκαλος*) is given to Christ in the Gospels, and five times it is used by Himself of Himself. In one place He expressly approves the use of it: "Ye call Me Teacher . . . and ye say well, for so I am" (S. John xiii. 13).

<sup>4</sup> S. John vi. 14; cf. S. Luke vii. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. i. 1, 2.

<sup>6</sup> See above, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> S. John xvi. 13.



and thus fitted them, in their turn, to make disciples of all nations.<sup>1</sup>

(b) But, Divine Truth being thus revealed through the living voice of the Church, it follows that some definite organisation is necessary in order to guard it. For human language is liable to a great deal of change in lapse of time through development or degeneration. Words, left to themselves, are apt both to lose something of their proper and original meaning, and also to acquire new meaning as they are used and applied under varying circumstances by successive generations of men. If, therefore, the ideas originally connoted by words are to be preserved and their proper significance is to have full force in age after age, it is necessary that, besides the constant proclamation of them by the living voice, there should also be an organised tradition as to their meaning, an official and authoritative interpretation. We naturally expect therefore, and are prepared to find, that a Church entrusted with an oral teaching should have an orderly constitution and an Apostolic succession. It is this aspect of the Christian Ministry which is so prominent in the writings of Irenæus.<sup>2</sup> The Church, in the view of that Father, is a world-wide society handing down to successive generations Divine Truth, and the guarantee of this Truth—that which secures its genuineness and purity—is the Episcopal succession instituted by, and traceable back to, the Apostles themselves.<sup>3</sup> Irenæus chiefly regards the Apostolic Succession as preserving Catholic tradition and as

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> See this point elaborated and illustrated by many quotations in GORE, *The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 119 *et seqq.*

<sup>3</sup> "We can enumerate those who were appointed by the Apostles as bishops in the Churches and their successors even unto us."—IRENÆUS, *Adv. Her.* III. iii. 1.

"By the same ordination and succession the tradition of the Apostles in the Church and the proclamation of the truth have come even unto us."—*Adv. Her.* III. iii. 3.

Cf. TERTULLIAN, *De Præscriptionibus*, cap. 32: "If any heresies dare to connect themselves with the Apostolic age, pretending to be derived

the essential link of continuity in the Church's delivery of the message of Divine Truth, the bond and safeguard in the transmission of the faith that was once for all delivered.

We are thus able to see the appropriateness of the Apostolic Ministry and to understand how necessary it is for the Church. But it was not merely instituted by men from motives of policy, nor is the ministerial office in the Church to be assumed by anyone who may fancy that he is personally fitted for it. If men might assume such office at pleasure S. Paul would not ask so emphatically, "Are all Apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?"<sup>1</sup> As the Apostolic Ministry is Divinely instituted and commissioned, so also it cannot be assumed without Divine authority; men cannot preach except they be sent.<sup>2</sup> Christ's own Office, as has been already shown, was not self-assumed, but He was an Apostle, commissioned and sent by the Father;<sup>3</sup> He came not in His own name but in the Name of the Father.<sup>4</sup> So too, viewing Christ's Office in its Priestly aspect, since it is a priest's function to act towards God as well as on behalf of man, it is essential that He should be approved and appointed by God, as well as be in sympathy with man. Accordingly we read in the Epistle to the Hebrews that "Christ glorified not Himself to be made a High-Priest, but He that spake unto Him, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee; as He saith also in another place, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."<sup>5</sup> Now since the High-Priestly Office of the Lord Himself, which is the foundation of all Priestly Office, is not self-assumed, but conferred by Divine appointment, it is manifest that the

from the Apostles because they existed in their time, we may say: Let them declare the origin of their churches; let them unfold the catalogue of their bishops, so descending by succession from the beginning, that the first bishop had as his ordainer and predecessor some one of the Apostles, or of the Apostolic men who remained united to the Apostles."

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. x. 15.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 97.

<sup>4</sup> S. John v. 43.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. v. 5, 6.

same will hold good of all exercise of priestly office, whether of the typical priesthood of the Old Covenant, or of the Christian Priesthood, which is an extension and application in the world of Christ's own office now exercised for us in Heaven.<sup>1</sup> No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron.<sup>2</sup> It is Christ Himself Who gives to the Church Apostles, pastors, and teachers.<sup>3</sup> It is the Holy Ghost Who makes men overseers of the Church of God.<sup>4</sup>

It is evident, therefore, that the inward call of the Holy Spirit is not, in itself, sufficient to constitute any man a Minister of the Church. However indispensable as a preliminary condition such inward call may be,<sup>5</sup> it is necessary that he who acts as an ambassador of Christ<sup>6</sup> should be able to prove his Mission to others, and internal vocation is, by its very nature, incapable of affording such proof, so that an external call, an evident Mission, is essential to the Christian Ministry. The available evidence to our hand in the Acts of the Apostles shows us that, from the very beginning, the express inward call of the Holy Spirit was not looked upon as of itself sufficient. The ordination of SS. Paul and Barnabas by imposition of hands was undertaken in obedience to a Divine command, although both had already received an unmistakable Divine call to their life-work. "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I have called them*. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and *laid their hands on them, they sent*

<sup>1</sup> Heb. vii. 24-6; ix. 24-6.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. v. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. iv. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xx. 28.

<sup>5</sup> The inward call of the Holy Spirit is assumed in our Ordinal as a necessary qualification in him who seeks Ordination at the Bishop's hands. See the questions addressed to candidates for the Diaconate and the Priesthood respectively: "Do you trust that you are *inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost* to take upon you this Office and Ministration?" "Do you think in your heart, that you be truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . to the Order and Ministry of Priesthood?"

<sup>6</sup> 2 Cor. v. 20.

*them away.*"<sup>1</sup> It is obvious that here the Ordination by imposition of hands is regarded and represented as conferring Apostolic Mission upon men who were not of the number of the original twelve Apostles.

Some, especially such as have been influenced by the Swiss Reformers of the sixteenth century, have held and acted upon the theory that election at the hands of the people and public approbation or recognition by them is of itself sufficient to constitute a man a minister of the Church of Christ. It is not to be denied, of course, that in early times the people frequently had a voice in the election of those who should hold office in the Church, but the custom was at no time universal, and, however desirable it may appear,<sup>2</sup> such popular election cannot be held to be at all necessary as a qualification for the due exercise of the Ministry. Further, it must be observed that for those who may have been chosen by the people regular ordination by laying on of hands has always been considered necessary in the Church. That it was so considered at the very beginning is clearly apparent in the case of the appointment of the Seven Deacons to their office in the Church at Jerusalem under the immediate supervision of the Apostles themselves. The Seven whose names are recorded in Acts vi. were indeed chosen as fit men for their proposed work by the whole body of the brethren at the express desire of the Apostles, but they were afterwards admitted to their office by imposition of the Apostles' hands. "The twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, . . . Look ye out from among you seven men of good report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom. . . . And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, . . .

<sup>1</sup> Acts xiii. 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> It may be mentioned that, in our own Church, the consent and approval of the Church at large is first sought before the Bishop proceeds to lay hands on those presented to him for Ordination. In the Form for the Making of Deacons and in that for the Ordering of Priests the Bishop is directed to appeal to the congregation of the brethren and give opportunity for the statement of any impediment.

and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas . . . whom they set before the Apostles : and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.”<sup>1</sup>

While it is thus recognised that it is the Holy Spirit who inwardly moves men to seek the Ministerial office in the Church, and while it is laid down that the personal fitness of candidates should be tested and that the approval of the whole body is expedient, the essential thing in order to the due exercise of any Ministerial function is the imposition of hands of the Episcopate. By this is secured the perpetuation of the Mission of Christ in the world. “As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you”<sup>2</sup> were the Lord’s words to the Apostles, and as He was thus sent not only to exercise His Mission Himself in person, but to transmit it to others, so did the Apostles and those whom they appointed to succeed them understand that their commission carried with it power to send others with similar powers of transmission in their turn, even unto the end of the world. Hence from the time that the Church expanded through the preaching of the Apostles and those connected with them, and became locally organised, it was conceived a matter of necessity that every Church should have its bishop, presbyters, and deacons duly ordained to their office.<sup>3</sup> The statement cannot be seriously questioned that before the middle of the second century each organised Christian community had its three Orders of Ministers, each Church was ruled by a bishop with priests and deacons under him, and that at that time it was taken for granted that such had been the constitution of the Church from the first, no memory of any other state of things then surviving.<sup>4</sup> When we regard

<sup>1</sup> Acts vi. 2-6.

<sup>2</sup> S. John xx. 21.

<sup>3</sup> “It is necessary to obey those presbyters who are in the Church, those who have succession from the Apostles, as we have shown, and who, with the succession of the episcopate, have received the certain gift of truth, according to the will of the Father.”—IRENÆUS, *Adv. Hær.* IV. xxvi. See also the quotations from IRENÆUS, p. 102, note 3.

<sup>4</sup> “On this point there cannot reasonably be two opinions.”—Bishop LIGHTFOOT, “Christian Ministry” in *Commentary on Philippians*, p. 186. See also Dr. SALMON in the *Expositor*, July, 1887, p. 10.

this universal belief of the Church of the middle of the second century, and recall besides that S. John (according to such testimony as is available) lived on to the very end of the first century, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the permanent form of Church government, as we know it, is of Apostolic institution and authority. The authority by which every bishop or priest acts is thus one which is derived by succession from the Apostles, each generation in turn communicating to the next the warrant under which they themselves have been acting.

This has always been a principle of the Church of England, which has all along carefully guarded and preserved the Apostolical Succession. At the period of the Reformation, while in Germany, in Switzerland, and in Scotland the Reformers departed from the immemorial constitution of the Church,<sup>1</sup> it is especially noteworthy that there was in our own country no break in the continuity of the Ministry, and the Episcopal succession was uninterrupted.<sup>2</sup> It is true that in the confusion of Queen Elizabeth's reign, when some men held high office in the Church whose sympathies were rather with the polity of Geneva than with the order of the English Church,<sup>3</sup> there may have been occasional erratic departures,<sup>4</sup> but these were manifest irregularities, and the rule of the Church in this land as to the necessity of Episcopal Ordination has always been the same. The Church's intention in this

<sup>1</sup> It should be remembered, moreover, that even then the departure was unwillingly made by the Lutheran leaders and by Calvin. See the quotations given in the writer's *Thirty-nine Articles and the Age of the Reformation*, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> The attempts to prove that there was a breach of continuity at the accession of Archbishop Parker must be held to have failed. See *The Thirty-nine Articles and the Age of the Reformation*, pp. 292, 293.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* Grindal, Bishop of London, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, and Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich.

<sup>4</sup> As when Archbishop Grindal licensed John Morrison, who had received Presbyterian Orders only, to officiate in England. Bishop Hall, of Exeter (afterwards of Norwich), testifies to the Rule of the Church of England when he writes (in 1640) in his *Contemplations* (on Neh. vii. 64):



matter is sufficiently and unequivocally expressed in the Preface to the Ordinal :—

“It is evident unto all men diligently reading the holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles’ time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ’s Church ; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Which Offices were evermore had in such reverend Estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same ; and also by publick Prayer, with Imposition of Hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful Authority. And therefore, to the intent that these Orders may be continued, and reverently used and esteemed, in the [United] Church of England [and Ireland] ; no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon in the [United] Church of England [and Ireland], or suffered to execute any of the said Functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto, according to the Form hereafter following, or hath had formerly Episcopal Consecration, or Ordination.”

Putting this Preface side by side with other passages in the Prayer Book we may set out in the form of propositions, for the sake of clearness, the position to which the English Church is committed. Our Church holds and teaches :—

1. That God in His Providence and by the leading of His Holy Spirit has appointed divers Orders in His Church.<sup>1</sup>

“Those of the Priestly Tribe which could not deduce their genealogy from the register are cashiered as unclean. Then God would be served in blood, *now in a due succession*. If we could not fetch our pedigree from Christ and His Apostles, we were not fit for the Evangelical Altar. Their calling was by nature, ours by grace—the grace of inward abilities, of *outward Ordination*. If we cannot prove *both these* we are justly abandoned.” The intention of the rulers of the Church in Queen Elizabeth’s reign is further indicated in the *Canons of 1571*, where it is provided that “the bishop shall suffer no man to be occupied in the ministration of the Church which calleth himself by the idle name of a reader, not having received imposition of hands” (ed. Collins, p. 28).

<sup>1</sup> See the Second Ember Collect and the Collects in the Ordinal.

2. That these Orders are the three Orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

3. That it is plain from the evidence of Holy Scripture and ancient authors that these Orders have been in the Church from the Apostles' times.

4. That it is not lawful for any one to take these Offices upon him, except he be lawfully called and sent to execute them by men who have public authority to call and send Ministers,<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* no man may presume to execute these offices except he be approved and admitted thereto with imposition of hands by lawful authority.

5. That this lawful authority is Episcopal authority—the men who have public authority to call and send Ministers are the Bishops, duly consecrated according to the law of the Catholic Church in all ages.

6. That no one is to be accounted a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon who has not had Episcopal Consecration or Ordination.

While the great majority of Protestant Communions are in their system of government and organisation Presbyterian or Congregational, and have attempted to justify their position by the assumption that the New Testament affords no warrant for the Episcopal system with its three Orders, the Church of England is definitely committed to the statement that in retaining the Catholic hierarchy it is guarding an inheritance from Apostolic times, that its own immemorial system is, in fact, the original constitution of the Church of Christ. The assertion in the Preface to the Ordinal that “from the Apostles' times there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; Bishops, Priests, and Deacons,” which has sometimes been thought over-bold, is rather confirmed and vindicated by searching inquiry and dispassionate weighing of the evidence at our disposal. The late Bishop Lightfoot, owing to the general impression produced by much of the matter in his famous Essay on the Christian Ministry, is

<sup>1</sup> Art. xxiii.

often referred to as having favoured the opinion that Episcopacy does not belong to the original constitution of the Church. But after making the assertion that "as late as the year 70 no distinct signs of Episcopal government have hitherto appeared in Gentile<sup>1</sup> Christendom," Bishop Lightfoot goes on to admit unreservedly that the plain statement of the Preface to the Ordinal is true to history. He says: "Unless we have recourse to a sweeping condemnation of received documents, it seems vain to deny that early in the second century the episcopal office was widely and firmly established. Thus during the last three decades of the first century, and consequently *during the lifetime of the latest surviving Apostle, this change must have been brought about.*"<sup>2</sup> What is this last clause but a candid acknowledgment that the Church is right in tracing her threefold Order back to Apostolic times? We may add that it seems naturally to follow that if the present constitution of the Ministry for the Church as a whole (as well as Jewish Christendom) dates from S. John's time at least, it cannot have originated without Apostolic consent and guidance, and in that case we may feel sure that it is the form of government for His Church which is according to the mind of the Lord Himself.

In nomenclature, indeed, the present constitution does not correspond with the New Testament account of Church organisation, but if we regard *things* rather than names, the correspondence is seen to be close. In the Acts and Epistles two Orders of Ministers are clearly mentioned and distinguished:—

(1) Deacons (διάκονοι).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This qualifying word is necessarily inserted because it is admitted that the case of S. James at Jerusalem furnishes an example of Episcopal government in Jewish Christendom. See Dissertation on the Christian Ministry in LIGHTFOOT'S *Commentary on Philippians*, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> Dissertation on the Christian Ministry, p. 201.

<sup>3</sup> The term διάκονος (translated minister) is frequently used in the New Testament with general application to all Christian Ministers of whatever grade, and is used by the Apostles of themselves. See e.g. 2 Cor. iii. 6; vi. 4; Eph. iii. 7; 1 Tim. iv. 6; and Acts i. 25, where Apostleship is called

(2) Presbyters (πρεσβύτεροι)<sup>1</sup> or Bishops (ἐπίσκοποι).<sup>2</sup>

Then (3) above these two Orders we have the Office held by the Twelve, by SS. Paul and Barnabas, by S. James at Jerusalem, and by Timothy and Titus at Ephesus and Crete. It is clear from the Pastoral Epistles that to Timothy and Titus were delegated Apostolic powers to ordain ministers,<sup>3</sup> to take measures for ensuring sound doctrine,<sup>4</sup> to administer discipline,<sup>5</sup> and to provide for the due order of the Church.<sup>6</sup> No official title is given to Timothy or Titus,<sup>7</sup> but to this third and highest order—the *continuation of the Apostolate in the Church*—the title *Bishop* was afterwards transferred and restricted. Thus, though the names were not fixed for some time, the Offices themselves were fixed in Apostolic times, and have been handed on in regular succession since. The three New Testament Orders, (1) Apostles, (2) Presbyters or Bishops,

a *διακονία*. But *διάκονος* appears as a distinctive term for a particular order in Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 8, 12. The seven whose ordination is recorded in Acts vi. are not expressly called Deacons, but the title seems to be suggested by the phrase *διακονεῖν τραπεζαῖς* (Acts vi. 2), which describes their special work.

<sup>1</sup> Presbyters, elders, or priests (πρεσβύτεροι) are mentioned as a matter of course as being in office at Jerusalem in Acts xi. 30, though no account has been previously given of their appointment. It is also recorded that SS. Paul and Barnabas, as a matter of course, ordained presbyters in each new Church which they founded (Acts xiv. 23; cf. Titus i. 5).

<sup>2</sup> That Presbyter (πρεσβύτερος) and Bishop (ἐπίσκοπος) were in the earliest times alternative titles indifferently applied to holders of one and the same office appears from several passages. S. Paul, in addressing the presbyters of the Ephesian Church (Acts xx. 17), calls them bishops (v. 28), and in stating the qualifications for the office of a presbyter, he says "the bishop must be blameless," etc. (Titus i. 5-7). In Phil. i. 1, too, "bishop" seems to be used as an alternative name for presbyter.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. v. 22; Titus i. 5.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Tim. i. 3; iv. 6, 13, 14; 2 Tim. i. 13; ii. 2; iv. 2-4; Titus i. 9, 13; ii. 1, 2, 15.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 10; v. 5; Titus iii. 10.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 15; Titus i. 5.

<sup>7</sup> In this respect the Highest Order of the Ministry is in similar case with the Sacrament of the Eucharist, which has in the New Testament no absolutely distinctive name.

(3) Deacons, correspond to our three Orders, (1) Bishops, (2) Presbyters or Priests, (3) Deacons.

Much has been written in recent times on the development of the Ministry of the Church. Bishop Lightfoot, in his Dissertation on the Christian Ministry, argued that the complete Episcopal organisation grew naturally out of the needs of the Church in early times; and the drift of the late Dr. Hatch's *Bampton Lectures* is to show that the Church's Ministry, viewed from the human side only, was naturally developed out of the circumstances of the age in which the Church was planted and expanded, one of the specially marked characteristics of the atmosphere in which the infant Church of Christ was reared, being, as he tells us, a "tendency towards the formation of associations."<sup>1</sup> Without binding ourselves to accept the particular account of the origin and development of Church Offices which any one historian or theologian may present to us, and about which there may well be more than one opinion, we may unreservedly admit that, the history and development of the Church being regarded only on its human side, the institution of the Ministry followed a natural law, and was designed by human leaders to meet obvious and immediate needs. This clearly appears to have been the case in the institution of the Diaconate as recorded in Acts vi. But the fact that we may be able, more or less accurately, to trace the natural development of the Ministry is not in itself an objection against considering it to be at the same time a Divine Institution. That God should so use the needs of men and the natural circumstances of their life in the world as to establish and perfect His institution and purpose, would only be of a piece with the working of His Providence in general, and in harmony with His ordinary method of operation. We may illustrate and confirm this by referring to the parallel case of the Priesthood of the Jewish Church. The Priesthood of Aaron and his descendants, which ministered in the Tabernacle and Temple, is in the Old Testament recorded to have been Divinely appointed, and in the historical books

<sup>1</sup> HATCH's *Bampton Lectures*, p. 26.

of the Canon is consistently viewed and spoken of as a Divine institution. At the same time, if we were to set out to write the history of Israel from a secular point of view merely, when we came to treat of the institution of the Aaronic Priesthood, we should note the fact that it grew naturally out of the needs of the Israelites assembled at Mount Sinai.

It is sometimes urged as an objection by opponents of the Church that the transmission of her Ministry and Mission by succession from the Apostles is something which cannot be proved in fact. It is true, indeed, that in one sense Apostolic succession requires very complicated proof, but to insist, as some objectors do, on the presentation of this complicated proof in full, to demand such kind of proof as shall absolutely preclude all possibility of doubt, is scarcely reasonable. For while, in one sense, the Apostolical Succession demands a complicated proof, in another it is a matter of moral certainty, a palpable fact. No one doubts the fact of the Ordination or Consecration of the clergy or bishops now officiating, although there may be here and there an occasional impostor. But the assurance which we have and act upon in this respect rests upon no strict proof or examination of legal evidence; it rests simply upon the overwhelming presumption that, the known rule of the Church being what it is, the facts would not be as they are unless there were a sure proof in detail behind them; and this presumption extends right back to the beginning. Abundant evidence is adducible that from the earliest times bishops alone had power to consecrate bishops and to ordain ministers, and the consecration of a new bishop was not a thing done in a corner, but was a ceremony of interest to a great number of people, performed in the presence of many witnesses, and officially notified to other bishops and to the Church at large. Since the power of consecrating their successors has from the first rested with bishops alone, since only bishops can make bishops, our bishops who officiate to-day must have come from bishops, and so on step by step backward across the centuries, so that the bishop of to-day proves the bishop of eighteen hundred years ago. As Bishop



Thompson of Mississippi has put it, "You might as well tell me that I cannot prove that the oak tree on the lawn has an unbroken descent from some oak of two thousand years ago! I do not need to prove a self-evident fact in nature, or a self-evident fact in organic society." Moreover, it must be remembered that it has been the general rule of the Church as a whole, as it now is with us, for at least three bishops to unite in each Episcopal consecration, so that a bishop traces his succession not merely by a long chain of single links, as some seem to imagine, but every bishop in each generation is connected with the Episcopate of the past by a complicated network of many links, so interwoven as to put the validity of the succession practically beyond question, even though a flaw in the network might be pointed out here and there.

S. Ignatius of Antioch traces the institution and authority of the Episcopate to "the ordinances of the Apostles."<sup>1</sup> Irenæus and Tertullian, as we have already noticed,<sup>2</sup> appealed confidently to the Apostolical Succession as to something evident and beyond question, which secured Ecclesiastical unity and the continuity of the Church of their own day with that of the earliest times. From the way in which these writers make their appeals it is evident that the succession of bishops from the Apostles and from the immediate associates of the Apostles was then generally recognised and capable of being verified; while, on the other hand, that since their time the succession of the bishops of the Church has not been broken is allowed even by the Church's enemies. "No Church without a bishop," writes Gibbon, "has been a fact as well as a maxim since the time of Irenæus and Tertullian."<sup>3</sup> Hooker, therefore, was justified when he challenged the Puritan sectaries: "We require you to find out but one church upon the face of the whole earth, that hath been ordered by your discipline, or hath not been ordered

<sup>1</sup> *Epistle to the Trallians*, vii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 102, n. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. xv.

by ours, that is to say, by episcopal regiment, sithence the time that the blessed Apostles were here conversant.”<sup>1</sup>

A good deal of prejudice is sometimes created against the Apostolic Succession and the Church's doctrine of the Ministry by urging that it involves for those who hold it a narrowness of mind and an uncharitable spirit towards their Dissenting brethren; and we must confess that this prejudice has sometimes been strengthened by unguarded or inconsiderate utterances on the part of some who have upheld the Church's doctrine. But it is very necessary, in a careful discussion of principles, to distinguish between Theology and the temper of Theologians. Now it is of course obvious that Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and various other bodies which have seceded from the historic Church since the sixteenth century are without the Apostolical Succession in the sense in which Churchmen understand it. This they themselves fully admit, and not only so, but they defend, and set themselves to justify, their present position and lack of it. The Succession has not been preserved by them because, in their view, it is a matter of no moment that it should be preserved, nor do they look upon it as in any way essential to the constitution of the Church. The ideas of Apostolical Succession and of the Priesthood of the Christian Ministry are more or less emphatically rejected, sometimes even scorned and ridiculed—for the bitterness of controversy has not been all on one side—by the sects. This being the case, it is a little difficult, surely, to see where any rudeness or uncharitableness comes in when we simply affirm that others have not that which they themselves lay no claim to, but have expressly repudiated.

Moreover, when we are earnestly striving to ascertain and arrive at principles, we should not, if we would ensure fairness and freedom of inquiry, allow ourselves at the outset to be prejudiced by fear of possible results that may have to be faced. Thus in the case of Apostolical Succession, now under

<sup>1</sup> *clesiastical Polity*, Preface, iv. 1.

discussion, it is our duty first to investigate the question impartially, and when upon such investigation we are convinced that the perpetuation of the Mission and Work of Christ in the world through the Ministerial Succession in His Church is truly the Divine intention, and that this Succession in a proper sense belongs only to Episcopally organised Churches—when we are convinced of this, it must surely be our duty to be faithful to the principle. Then afterwards, of course, we shall have to consider the practical bearing of the principle upon the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed, but fear of possible consequences should not be allowed to deter us from facing a principle which we have every reason to think true.

If, then, the principle of Apostolical Succession is established, as we ourselves believe, it will be well here to indicate shortly what attitude the holding of it implies towards those bodies of Christians who have not the Succession :—

In the first place it may be pointed out that the recognition of Apostolical Succession as a law of the Church's life does not necessarily carry with it the "*un-churching*" of non-episcopal bodies, as many have been led to suppose. It is Christ's own appointed ordinance of Baptism that makes men members of His Church. All those who have been baptized, in accordance with His institution, with water in the Sacred Name of the Trinity, have put on Christ,<sup>1</sup> and have therefore, and thereby, been incorporated as members of the One Church, which is His Body.<sup>2</sup> The estrangement of Dissenters from their fellow-members of the Church is on all grounds to be deeply regretted, and their irregular organisation is a serious defect, but it cannot of itself un-church them, it does not in itself deprive them of their privileges and responsibilities as members of the Church of Christ which they entered at their Baptism.

But, while it cannot rob them of their Church membership, this departure from what we cannot but regard as a funda-

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iii. 27.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 13.

mental rule of the Church must clearly take away all security or validity from the ministry of the sects.<sup>1</sup> We do not, in so saying, deny that the grace of God may have worked, and may still work, through their ministry,<sup>2</sup> irregular though it be, where it has been exercised and used conscientiously and in good faith. We do not ask that Dissenters should repudiate their own spiritual experience, for God is not necessarily tied in His operations even to the ordinances of His own appointment. Yet, as will be pointed out in our discussion of the Sacraments, we men are certainly bound to the terms of God's covenant with us, where these are clearly known to us. "It is highly necessary," as Bishop Butler says, "to remind ourselves how great presumption it is to make light of any institutions of Divine appointment; that our obligations to obey all God's commands whatever are absolute and indispensable; and that commands merely positive, admitted to be from Him, lay us under a moral obligation to obey them, an obligation moral in the strictest and most proper sense."<sup>3</sup> It appears, therefore, that, since the ministry of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and other Protestant sects is an irregular one, and a departure from the Apostolic constitution of the Church, the ministerial acts of such ministry are invalid, by which we mean that those who exercise and use it, since they have departed (whether wittingly or unwittingly) from God's providential ordering of His Church, cannot be sure of His covenanted grace.

<sup>1</sup> "Let no man do aught of things pertaining to the Church apart from the Bishop. Let that be held a valid (*βεβαία*) Eucharist which is under the Bishop or one to whom he shall have committed it."—IGNATIUS, *Epistle to the Smyrneans*, viii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> In *Cranmer's Catechism* (1548) this is denied: "You shall take good hede, and beware of false and priuye preachers, whiche priuely crepe into cities, and preache in corners, hauyng none authoritie, nor being called to this office. For Christe is not present with such prechers, and therefore dothe not the Holy Gost worke by their preching, but their worde is withoute fruite or profyt, and they do great hurte in common welthes" (Oxford ed., p. 197).

<sup>3</sup> *Analogy of Religion*, part ii. chap. i.

We must notice further the strong confirmation of Apostolic Succession afforded by the fact that though the sects have it not, yet at the same time they, generally speaking, recognise the principle of Succession in the Ministry, and the necessity of an outward and visible Commission for their ministers, as well as an inward call. The presbyters who originated the ministries of sects in the sixteenth century, and those who later ordained the Wesleyan ministry certainly sought to exercise a power which was not included in the commission they had received from the Church. They took to themselves powers which they had not by right. Yet in their societies the principle of Succession is maintained. None amongst them may lay hands on a candidate for the ministry but such as have themselves been previously ordained, and this Ordination is looked upon as conferring authority not only to preach, but to minister the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. It may be said, indeed, that "this has been the general sentiment of all professing Christians."<sup>1</sup> At the Reformation those who broke away from the historic Church nevertheless repudiated the idea that any should intrude themselves upon the Ministry upon the ground of an inward call merely, without some outward and formal commission from the Church. Thus the Swiss Reformers in the Second Helvetic Confession (1562) lay down that "no man ought to usurp the honour of the Ecclesiastical Ministry. . . . But let the Ministers of the Church be called and chosen by a lawful and Ecclesiastical election and vocation. . . . And those which are chosen, let them be ordained of the Elders, with public prayer and laying on of hands. We do here therefore condemn all those which run of their own accord, being neither chosen, sent, nor ordained."<sup>2</sup> Calvin himself writes to the same effect: "that restless and turbulent persons may not presumptuously intrude themselves into the office of teaching or of governing, it is expressly provided that no one shall assume a public office in the Church without a call."<sup>3</sup> This call he explains to

<sup>1</sup> PALMER, *On the Church*, vol. i. p. 137.

<sup>2</sup> *Second Helvetic Confession*, Art. xviii.      <sup>3</sup> *Institutes*, IV. iii. 10.

include, amongst other things, a "form of Ordination."<sup>1</sup> Again, in the Lutheran Confession of Wurtemberg it is stated that "it is evident that except an Elder be ordained in the Church to the work of teaching, he cannot rightly take unto himself the name of an Elder."<sup>2</sup> We may note, too, that though by the Presbyterians of Scotland, in the First Book of Discipline (1560), only the public approbation of the people was held to be essential for the admission of Ministers to their office,<sup>3</sup> nevertheless, in the Second Book of Discipline (1578), the abolished ceremony of laying on of hands was introduced. "Ordinatione is the separation and sanctifying of the person appointed to (*al.* by) God and His Kirk after he be weill tryet and fund qualifyet. The ceremonies of Ordination are fasting, earnest prayer, and imposition of hands of the eldership."

We have already remarked that by the Fathers, and especially by Irenæus, the Apostolic Succession, embodied in the Episcopal government of the Church, was looked upon as the great safeguard of revealed truth, securing the due preservation and transmission from generation to generation of the faith once for all delivered.<sup>4</sup> The correctness of this view that the Faith and Constitution of the Church are thus bound up together is confirmed in a striking manner by the testimony of history. The first serious departure from the Apostolic Constitution of the Church took place in the sixteenth century when the universally established Episcopal government was "interrupted by the republican genius of the Swiss and German Reformers."<sup>5</sup> Since that time we have had ample proof that continuance in Apostolic *fellowship* and steadfastness in Apostolic doctrine, which alike marked the Pentecostal Church,<sup>6</sup> are intimately connected and equally necessary as permanent notes of the Church of Christ. The Lutherans

<sup>1</sup> *Institutes*, IV. iii. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Wurtemberg Confession* (1552), Art. xx.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 102.

<sup>5</sup> GIBBON, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. xv.

<sup>6</sup> Acts ii. 42.



or Protestants in Germany and the Reformed in Switzerland, France, and Holland broke off at the Reformation from the Apostolic model of Church government, and we cannot but observe that their spiritual descendants, and bodies which since the sixteenth century have followed their example in seceding from the Church, have been more or less unsuccessful in maintaining the purity and vitality of the Apostolic Faith. In some cases, as in England and Scotland, where those who have seceded have to a considerable extent kept in touch with the Catholic Church, and have been, though perhaps unconsciously, under the influence of the traditions, literature, and theology of the Church, decay of the orthodox Faith is, as we should naturally expect, not so apparent. Dissenters in our own country are doubtless kept up to the standard of the Faith by the general religious atmosphere, though even here it must be confessed that a close examination reveals a sad tendency of modern Non-conformity to drift towards Socinianism or Unitarianism. But in other parts, where the separatist tendency has had freer play than with us, and where we are accordingly better able to observe its proper effects, as in particular in the Low Countries, in Switzerland, and amongst the French Reformed, it is clearly seen that departure from the Apostolical Succession has literally been a rejection of the safeguard of the Faith. The attempt to amend the constitution of the Church, however well meant at the outset, has as a matter of fact brought in its train a defection from the vital truths of the Church's Creed. For it cannot be denied that, in spite of individual examples of stedfastness in the Faith of the Church, the general complexion of the Reformed of Holland, Geneva, and France presents the spectacle of bodies of professing Christians amongst whom faith in Christ as the Divine Redeemer, the Eternal Son of God Incarnate—that faith which has historically given all its strength to the Christian Religion, because it has brought men into touch not only with a Great Example but with a Divine Saviour from sin—seems to have evaporated. In view, then, of the testimony of history we feel that it is not

too much to affirm that Christ had sound and deep reason for committing His truth to a chosen and ordained Apostolic body<sup>1</sup> and to their duly appointed successors in the Ministry. We cannot but conclude that the Faith of the Church and its Divinely appointed Constitution are connected by some unseen spiritual link, and stand or fall together.

<sup>1</sup> S. John xv. 16.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CHURCH AS PREACHER OF THE WORD OF GOD

THE Church's office is, in the first place, a Prophetic one : it is her Mission to declare to man the will of God. She is entrusted with a Divine Revelation that she may guard it and proclaim it to mankind. All Truth is indeed Divine, but not all is specially revealed to man. That which the Church is charged with, that she may preach it, is Revealed Truth. Truth which men ascertain by the due exercise of their natural faculties is capable of indefinite progression as fresh light is from time to time thrown upon it by further inquiry, or as other truths are arrived at which necessitate its modification and re-statement. But Revealed Truth is once for all delivered,<sup>1</sup> and it is the Church's function to keep the original deposit pure that she may hand it on; to hold fast the form of sound words which she received from the first Apostolic preachers, and to keep it through the power of the indwelling Spirit,<sup>2</sup> that she may be the pillar and ground of the Truth.<sup>3</sup>

It is often assumed, however, that the Church's central doctrines were not received from the Apostles, that the first preachers of Christianity were not preachers of doctrine, and had no theory of the Person of Christ, but that, inspired by the memory of the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, they urged moral lessons upon their hearers with a new force, appealing to the great thought of the Fatherhood of God,

<sup>1</sup> S. Jude 3.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. i. 13, 14.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 15.

which the Master had impressed upon them, and to the implied truth of the brotherhood of man. That such a statement of the case is inadequate and does not fully correspond with the facts should be apparent to every careful reader of the New Testament. For, upon examination, it is surely plain that Doctrine, and especially Doctrine with regard to the Person of Christ, is everywhere presupposed in the New Testament books. Even in the very first Christian Sermon—that preached by S. Peter on the birthday of the Church—this is the case. Those to whom that sermon was addressed were members of the chosen race to whom had been entrusted the oracles of God,<sup>1</sup> and the Revelation embodied in the Old Testament Scriptures is presupposed by S. Peter as he addresses them. But, over and above the Old Testament doctrines, the very essence of the sermon lies in the communication of a new, and to the hearers a startling Revelation, involving a certain theory as to the Person of Christ—viz. that Jesus of Nazareth, Whom they had crucified, and Whom God had raised from the dead, is both Lord and Christ, and now, exalted at the right hand of the Father, pours forth the promised gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> This Pentecostal Sermon of S. Peter's may be taken as a typical example of Apostolic preaching, and it shows how very far short of the truth is that representation which sets forth the Apostles as simply ethical and moral preachers, fired by the memory of a dead Master, but without theory or doctrine as to the person of a living Christ. As we read the Evangelical account of the training of the Twelve by the Lord we see that He educated them to form a theory of His Person, and when S. Peter in answer to the question, Who say ye that I am? professed his faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, then the Lord pronounced him fit for the work to which he had been called—the founding of the Church. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church."<sup>3</sup> Now it is just this doctrine as to the Person of Christ, which S. Peter had been

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii. 2.<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 32, 33, 36.<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 15-18.

taught in his intercourse with Him, and which had received His blessing—it is this very doctrine which is added in S. Peter's Pentecostal Sermon to the great traditions of the Old Testament Scriptures, which his hearers had inherited. It was the message, involving this same doctrine of the Person of Christ, which formed *the Word of God* to Israel.<sup>1</sup> As the proclamation of this Divine Message involved the preaching of a certain doctrine concerning Christ, so too the acceptance in faith of this same doctrine formed a necessary condition of entrance into the Church; for there can be no doubt that from the very beginning admission to the fellowship of the Christian Church was dependent upon two subjective conditions. There was an intellectual as well as a moral condition. Of those who sought Baptism at the hands of the Apostles and their associates not only was it required that they should repent of the sins of the past and renounce them, but also that they should profess faith in Jesus as the Son of God, Who has power to save them from their sins. Their entrance into the Church carried with it the adoption of a common faith, no less than of a common life; "they continued stedfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship."<sup>2</sup> The earliest Baptismal Creed was no doubt simple and short, but it is equally beyond doubt that a definite profession of faith in Jesus as the Son of God was required of all who sought admission into the Church. Thus we read that it was when the people of Samaria *believed* Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and *the Name of the Lord Jesus* they were baptized.<sup>3</sup> In response to the question of the conscience-stricken gaoler at Philippi, the condition of Baptism unto Salvation demanded by Paul and Silas is belief on the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> A typical form of the profession of faith made at Baptism is preserved in the very early addition to the New Testament text in Acts viii. 37, where the form put into the mouth of the Æthiopian eunuch runs, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." In the earliest stages

<sup>1</sup> Acts x. 36 *et seqq.*

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Acts viii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xvi. 31.

of the Church's existence, when she was entirely a Missionary institution, and when adults and not infants naturally formed the great majority of the subjects for Baptism, the Faith of Christ, as orally transmitted from the Apostles, was taught and catechetically expounded to converts. This Faith was being systematically taught before the New Testament was written, and even before the circumstances which gave occasion to most of the New Testament books had occurred. Instruction in this faith and firm belief of it, is, indeed, continually presupposed in the New Testament writings, which bear upon their face the evidence that they were not intended for primary instruction.<sup>1</sup> We cannot scientifically treat passages of the New Testament if we regard them as having no other context than that which appears in black and white before our eyes; they had when first penned, and have ever had in the minds of Christians, another context which it should be impossible to disregard. They are not addressed to minds in a blank condition—if that were the case they could hardly be understood at all—but they are addressed to minds which have been delivered (as S. Paul says to the Romans, a body of Christians to whom, it should be remembered, he was personally a stranger) to a type of teaching, as metals to a mould.<sup>2</sup> Thus the New Testament writings presuppose instruction in the first principles of the Christian Faith, and are intended to appeal to those who, being already Christians, have already as members of the Church received oral instruction.<sup>3</sup> This oral instruction had evidently assumed a definite outline by the time that the Pastoral Epistles of S. Paul were written, for reference is often made in those letters to a traditional deposit of doctrine, a form of sound words, to be believed, held fast, taught, and handed on.<sup>4</sup> Both S. Peter and S. Paul speak of this characteristic doctrine of the Church as *the Word of God*.<sup>5</sup> In the early days before

<sup>1</sup> See especially S. Luke i. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. vi. 17.

<sup>3</sup> See 2 Thess. ii. 15; iii. 6; 1 Cor. xi. 2; xv. 3, 4; Rev. ii. 13.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Tim. i. 10; vi. 3, 20; 2 Tim. i. 13, 14; ii. 2; iii. 10, 14; Titus i. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Acts x. 36; 2 Tim. iv. 2.



the recognition of a New Testament Canon the permanent Rule of Faith was the teaching of the Apostles. "They continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine."<sup>1</sup> The Apostles were the Divinely appointed teachers of the Church, sent forth to make disciples of all nations.<sup>2</sup> They had received direct from their Master the express promise of guidance into all the Truth.<sup>3</sup> They had been assured that the Holy Spirit would bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever Christ had said unto them,<sup>4</sup> that He would take of the things of Christ and show them unto them.<sup>5</sup> Thus, at first, the oral teaching of the Apostles was naturally taken as the Rule of Faith, and to it, as to a standard, appeal is made. "Brethren," writes S. Paul to the Thessalonians, "stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or by our epistle."<sup>6</sup> Again, the Galatians, who were in danger of being removed from Him that called them into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel,<sup>7</sup> S. Paul expressly refers to the oral teaching they had at first received from him as their Rule of Faith. "Though we," he writes, "or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so now I say again, if any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."<sup>8</sup> That this Apostolic Rule of Faith was, in the lifetime of the Apostles themselves, summed up in a concise form, and so committed to memory and handed on, appears practically certain from the way in which S. Paul refers to it in his first letter to Corinth, where, in referring to the subject-matter of his preaching, he seems to quote (as is generally admitted) from some such summary. "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."<sup>9</sup> It would be a short dogmatic statement of this

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 42.<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19.<sup>3</sup> S. John xvi. 13.<sup>4</sup> S. John xiv. 26.<sup>5</sup> S. John xvi. 15.<sup>6</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 15.<sup>7</sup> Gal. i. 6.<sup>8</sup> Gal. i. 8, 9.<sup>9</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

kind, summing up the essence of Apostolic teaching with reference to the Person of Christ and His work for men, of which S. Paul a little later on makes mention to Timothy as the form of sound words, committed to the officials of the Church as a standard of doctrine, and to be held fast and taught by them.<sup>1</sup>

The great facts and essential doctrines round which the Apostolic teaching centred were thus at a very early period shortly stated in forms of words which served as statements of the Faith of the Church and as standards of sound doctrine. None of these primitive *symbola Fidei*, it appears, have been preserved in their entirety, but their simple nature is illustrated by the sentences quoted by S. Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians which we have referred to above, and by the similar quotation in the second-century *Apology of Aristides*:—

“He was pierced by the Jews,  
He died and was buried.  
After three days He rose  
And ascended into Heaven.”

The same Apologist also testifies to other fundamental beliefs of the Christians. He speaks of them as believing in God, the Maker of heaven and earth; as naming Jesus, Son of God Most High; and as saying that “God came down from Heaven, and from a Hebrew virgin took and clad Himself with flesh,” and of Whose return to judgment they live in expectation. The short statements of doctrine referred to, and occasionally quoted, in the New Testament,<sup>2</sup> and which evidently underlie Aristides’ account of the belief of the Christians of the earlier half of the second century, formed the nucleus of the later Creeds of the Church.

It may be at once readily admitted that the Christians of Apostolic times knew little of the distinctions and precise definitions which a few centuries later, when Greek thought had laid its riches at the feet of Christ, the enlightened under-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. i. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Besides 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4, see also 1 Cor. viii. 6; 1 Tim iii. 16.

standing of the Christian Society developed. These definitions and more fully detailed symbols, indeed, only took shape under the pressure of the necessity of reasoned thought, and through the need of meeting doctrines which, however specious, were felt to cut at the root of the Christian life. The later and fuller Creeds of the Church, however, must not be thought of as in any way inconsistent with the shorter and apparently simpler form of sound words current in New Testament and Apostolic times. For from the outset the mystery of the Holy Trinity was presupposed in the Apostolic preaching,<sup>1</sup> and implicitly contained in the Baptismal formula prescribed by the Lord before His Ascension when He sent His Apostles to make disciples of the nations, "baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."<sup>2</sup> The facts of the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension of Jesus Christ formed the burden of the Apostolic missionary sermons, and the distinct operation of the Holy Spirit in the mystical Body of Christ was clearly recognised. The fuller statements of the later Creeds, after all, add nothing to these essential articles of faith; they do but guard and protect while emphatically restating them.

The fuller statements of the Christian Faith, and the elaboration of the Christian Creed, as *e.g.* at the Council of Nicæa, are not, therefore, to be regarded as in any sense the outcome of a departure from the simple spontaneity of the faith of earlier days, or as being the evidence of a down-grade movement within the Church. On the contrary, since man is, by the constitution of his nature, an intellectual being, it is obvious that reasoned statements on a matter of vital interest must sooner or later become necessary, for we cannot legitimately refuse to allow reason to play upon the subject-matter of our belief. We cannot rightly make a sharp antithesis between faith and reason. God claims the homage of the mind no less than that of the heart and of the spirit,<sup>3</sup> and the understanding finds its legitimate exercise in the

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 32, 33.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xxii. 37.

sphere of Christian Truth, just as other sides of man's complex nature find their proper activity in the region of ethics and of morals. Christianity cannot therefore be a matter for the exercise of faith alone apart from reason, but it was by a necessary law, by a due development, and not by degeneration, that Christian doctrine was more fully and precisely stated as difficulties suggested themselves, and as questionings arose which demanded solution—solution which, in the light of the Revelation held in trust by the Church, they did not demand in vain. Some of the subjects which exercised the minds of Christians in the third and following centuries had no doubt not presented themselves, at any rate in the same aspect, to the earliest believers, but their elucidation as embodied in the later Creeds was drawn from the Faith held by the Church from the beginning, and had been implicitly contained in the Apostolic Rule of Faith.

The Divine Revelation, then, is a sacred deposit committed to the Church to be proclaimed as *the Word of God* to men, and to be guarded and handed on.<sup>1</sup> The Gospel message was at the first orally transmitted,<sup>2</sup> but incidental circumstances connected with the spread of the Gospel, and with the organisation of the Church in various localities, together with a desire to preserve in permanent form the testimony of eye-witnesses of the life of Christ, led the Apostles and others connected with them, in some cases disciples under their direction, to write certain books. The authors of these books (which constitute our New Testament) do not claim inspiration for themselves, and they had, it is manifest, at the time of writing, no thought of placing their own literary productions on the same level with the traditional Scriptures of the Jewish Church, which were by them, as Jewish Christians, revered as the oracles of God. It is equally clear that no writer of the New Testament sat down to his labour with the idea of elaborating a reasoned system of Theology, or a whole body of Divinity, nor even with the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. i. 14; ii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See *e.g.* 2 Tim. i. 13.

purpose of proving the essential points of the Christian Faith. These are assumed rather than formally stated. To these books, which were thus incidental in their origin, the general consent of the Christian Church as a whole afterwards set its seal as the *Written Word of God*.

Many books were written by devout Christians in Apostolic and sub-Apostolic times besides those which we account Canonical. In the preface to S. Luke's Gospel, for example, testimony is borne to the currency of many contemporary biographies of Christ.<sup>1</sup> We gather too, from allusions in those of his Epistles which have come down to us, that S. Paul wrote other letters, which have been lost.<sup>2</sup> In some early manuscripts of our New Testament books, moreover, other writings, such as the Epistle of S. Clement of Rome to the Corinthians,<sup>3</sup> the Epistle of Barnabas,<sup>4</sup> and the Shepherd of Hermas<sup>4</sup> are incorporated without any distinction and as though they were reckoned to be on the same level with the other books. How, then, were some of these books separated off from the others and formed into a Canon? And by what authority do we recognise as inspired Scripture the books thus discriminated? The reply that has been given in some quarters to this very important question is that the Sacred Scriptures are accredited by their own testimony. This was the ground taken by some of the teachers of the sixteenth century, who, having broken with the historic Church, started afresh, and without reference to Ecclesiastical traditions, to model a Theology and organise a Church from the Bible and the Bible only. Such teachers were obliged at the outset of their undertaking to assume the Divine authority and inspiration of the Bible, to treat it almost as though newly fallen direct from Heaven, and to hold it as self-authenticated. This was the standpoint of the Swiss school of Reformers especially. Calvin, for example, expressly says that the Scripture is *αὐτόπιστον*—self-authenti-

<sup>1</sup> S. Luke i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. v. 9; Col. iv. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Found in *Codex Alexandrinus* (A) of the fifth century.

<sup>4</sup> Found in *Codex Sinaiticus* (B) of the fourth century.

cated.<sup>1</sup> In the Belgic Confession it is affirmed that we believe without any doubt all those things contained in the Scriptures, "most of all because they themselves, by themselves, bear witness to and sanction this their own sacred authority and sanctity."<sup>2</sup> Similarly in the Second Helvetic Confession it is stated "we believe and confess that the Canonical Scriptures of the holy prophets and Apostles, of both Testaments, are the very true Word of God, and that they have sufficient authority of themselves."<sup>3</sup> This in fact amounts to saying that Scripture is the Word of God because it is the Word of God.<sup>4</sup> But that such account of the matter is eminently unsatisfactory was clearly seen by Hooker. "Of things necessary," he says, "the very chiefest is to know what books we are to esteem holy, which point is confessed impossible for the Scripture itself to teach. . . . It is not the Word of God which doth, or possibly can, assure us that we do well to think it is His Word."<sup>5</sup> We may well ask, How can a book bear witness to its own inspiration? If it were so, could we refuse to acknowledge the claim of the Qoran to Divine authority? Our Lord Himself, it should be remembered, refused this kind of proof of His own claims—"If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true"<sup>6</sup>—apparently in these words applying to His own case a recognised axiom with regard to authority. If no other objection could be stated against the theory under discussion, it is surely sufficient disproof to point out that if the Scriptures were the sole witness to their own authority, this witness would naturally be so strong and unmistakable that no diligent reader or earnest seeker after truth would be able to withstand or gainsay it, which in practical experience is very far from being the case.

Another theory which, amid the religious unsettlement of

<sup>1</sup> *Institutes*, I. vii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Belgic Confession* (1561), Art. v.

<sup>3</sup> *Second Helvetic Confession* (1562), Art. i.

<sup>4</sup> So *Westminster Confession* (1646), Art. i. § 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Ecclesiastical Polity*, I. xiv. 1. See PALMER, *On the Church*, ii. 4, 5.

<sup>6</sup> S. John v. 31.



the sixteenth century, found favour with Reformers both in Germany and Switzerland, and has since been held by many Protestant sects, is that which finds the ultimate authority of Scripture in the inner illumination of the individual reader. This is referred to as the prime test of Canonicity in the Confession of the Calvinists of France: "We acknowledge these books to be canonical; that is, we account them as the norm and rule of our faith, and that not only by the common consent of the Church, but also much more by the testimony and inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit, by Whose intimation we are taught to discern those books from other Ecclesiastical books."<sup>1</sup> Luther himself acted on the same principle, setting up a purely subjective standard of Canonicity, and writing as though he were able, by the illumination of the Spirit, to discriminate between what is and what is not Scripture. The actual result was that of some of the New Testament books which did not happen to lay special emphasis upon his own favourite doctrines, he was led to speak contemptuously. It is notorious, for instance, that he disparaged the Epistle of S. James, on account of the stress that is laid therein on the necessity of good works, as a "rubbishy letter."<sup>2</sup> Some of Luther's followers, such as Carlstadt in particular, carried the operation of the principle much farther, and have furnished us with ample proof that there can be no certainty or stability about a Bible which rests for its authority upon such merely subjective test. The theory, as sometimes stated, may perhaps sound well, but it is obvious that in practice it means that everyone is free to construct his own Bible for himself, rejecting at pleasure whatever writings do not appear to fall in with his own doctrinal prepossessions.

Again, it cannot be claimed that historical research authenticates the books of Scripture as Canonical. The historical argument plays a valuable and very necessary part, but it is

<sup>1</sup> *French Confession* (1559), Art. iv.

<sup>2</sup> "Straminea Epistola." Preface to the New Testament (1524), p. 105.

one of quite another kind. It helps us to determine the date, authorship, genuineness, and trustworthiness of early Christian writings, but no one would seriously claim for it that it can carry us further, or draw a line of demarcation between inspired and uninspired books. By argument and research we are assured of the genuineness of the Acts of the Apostles, for example, as a production of a travelling companion of S. Paul, and of its faithfulness to the history it professes to set forth. By argument and criticism of the same kind other early books, for instance the Epistle of S. Clement of Rome to Corinth, are also authenticated to us as genuine productions of the writers with whose names they are associated, and as historically trustworthy. But historical criticism cannot prove to us the Canonicity of the first-named and the non-Canonicity of the second of the books we have specified; it can only record for us the historical fact that the Acts of the Apostles has from a very early period been accounted Canonical, while the letter of S. Clement has been kept outside the Canon of Scripture.

As has been already stated, the books of Scripture do not claim inspiration for themselves, nor do they of themselves testify to their own Divine authority. They were not separated from other literature and formed into a Canon through the discernment of individuals, nor by any formal process of criticism. But the formation of the Christian Bible was a gradual process, and it was the usage of the Church as a whole which eventually fixed the limits of the Sacred Canon. There can be no doubt that the public reading in the assemblies of the Church was chiefly instrumental in separating the Canonical books from other Christian literature. While the Apostles themselves were living and directing the missionary work of the Church the deposit of sound doctrine was transmitted, as we have seen, by word of mouth. After their departure from the scene of their labours their writings and those of their immediate disciples and associates were naturally cherished, and were read aloud when Christians assembled for

worship.<sup>1</sup> The close parallel of this procedure with the custom of reading Lessons from the Old Testament in the synagogue services of the Jewish Church would prepare the way for regarding the Apostolical and Evangelical writings with like honour, and investing them with like authority to that which attached to the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Thus it was not the testimony of individuals, nor was it any formal decree, but the general consent, gradually arrived at, of the Christian Body as a whole which singled out certain writings as embodying in permanent form the great Truths of the Gospel for the use of the whole Church. Upon such general consent of the Church the written Rule of Faith of Christendom must finally rest, and it is expressly upon this ground that the Church of England in the Thirty-nine Articles acknowledges the New Testament books as Canonical Scripture. "In the name of Holy Scripture we do understand those Canonical books of the Old and New Testament, *of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.*"<sup>2</sup> "By experience we all know," writes Hooker, "that the first outward motive leading men so to esteem the Scriptures (*i.e.* as the oracles of God) is *the authority of God's Church.*"<sup>3</sup> We speak of the Scriptures as Canonical. Canon properly signifies a rule or standard. Hence, to state the matter shortly, and in the manner of a definition, the reason why we receive the books of Scripture as inspired, and account them as the written Word of God, enshrining for us in permanent form the Divine Revelation entrusted to the Church, is because *they are authorised by the general consent of the Church as the standard of Divine Truth.*

From what has been said it will appear that the Word of God is set forth to man in a twofold way: (1) by the living voice of the Church, and (2) by the written letter of Scripture.

<sup>1</sup> JUSTIN MARTYR (*Apology*, i. cap. 67) recounts that "On the day called Sunday, all that live either in city or country meet together at the same place, where the memoirs of the Apostles and the writings of the Prophets are read" preparatory to the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

<sup>2</sup> Art. vi.

<sup>3</sup> See PALMER, *On the Church*, ii. 61.

These are not of course in any way to be set in opposition the one to the other, but are mutually corroborative. Church doctrine is grounded upon and embodied in the letter of Scripture, which in turn receives its sanction from, and is accredited by, the testimony of the Church. The Church teaches, the Bible proves. In order, therefore, that any doctrine may be set forth to men as an essential part of God's Revelation, as an article of faith, necessary to be received and believed, the following conditions are requisite :—

It must be shown to belong to the Primitive and Apostolic deposit, enshrined in Holy Scripture, or provable thereby. "Whatsoever is not read in Holy Scripture, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."<sup>1</sup> A truth which is to be received as an article of faith must come to us by Divine Revelation, otherwise it could not be discovered at all. Such truth, therefore, is either explicitly stated in the written Word of God, or is preserved for us in the continuous tradition of the Catholic Church, whose living voice proclaims it to us as the Word of God, and refers us for proof to the Canonical Scriptures wherein it is implicitly contained, and whereby it may be proved. Thus the Creeds which embody the central truths of the Church's teaching are set before us as containing the essence of the Divine Revelation entrusted to the Church, and are at the same time presented for our acceptance and belief "because they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture."<sup>2</sup> From what has been said above it is sufficiently clear that the Scriptures are not strictly and properly a *source* of doctrine, but the Church appeals to them in confirmation of her teaching, as proving that she has not departed from the primitive deposit, but that her teaching to-day is identical with it, is, in fact, that very Word of God entrusted to her from the beginning for proclamation to men. We must not, therefore, separate the Word

<sup>1</sup> Art. vi.

<sup>2</sup> Art. viii.

written from the Word unwritten—the continuous tradition and teaching of the Church. While the Scriptures prove the tradition and testify to its continuity, ecclesiastical tradition at the same time interprets the Scriptures. The value of tradition, as set forth by the living voice of the Church, in interpreting Scripture is well illustrated by a notable passage of S. Ignatius. He heard certain persons saying, “Except I find it in the charters (*i.e.* the Scriptures) I do not believe it belongs to the Gospel.” He answered, “It is written,” but was met with the reply, “That is the question.” The written Word being thus claimed, as has often been the case since, by opposing parties as favouring their own several positions, the Bishop of Antioch makes appeal to the traditional Gospel message of the Church as interpreting the written Word. “As for me,” he says, “my charter is Christ Jesus, the inviolable charter is His Cross and His death, and His Resurrection, and faith through Him.”<sup>1</sup> Our own Reforming Bishop Cheyney<sup>2</sup> may be quoted to the same effect. “Scriptures, Scriptures, do you cry? Be not too hasty; for so the heretics always cried and had the Scriptures. I would ask this question: I have to do with a heretic; I bring the Scriptures against him, and he will confess it to be Scripture. But he will deny the sense that I bring it for. How now? How shall this be tried? Marry, by consent of Fathers only, and not by others.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, when the interpretation of Scripture is in question, does our Reformer appeal to the continuous tradition of the Church from Primitive times as decisive. It is very interesting, too, to note that Wesley consistently held to the same Catholic principle. We find him writing that the “one desire and design” of the early Methodists was “to be downright Bible-Christians, taking the Bible, *as interpreted by the Primitive Church and our own*, for their whole and sole rule.”<sup>4</sup> Such appeal to tradition is very

<sup>1</sup> *Epistle to the Philadelphians*, viii.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop of Gloucester 1562–81.

<sup>3</sup> STRYPE, *Annals*, vol. i. part ii. p. 278.

<sup>4</sup> *Wesley's Journal*, xv. 376.

pecially characteristic of the Reformed Church of England. The Continental Reformers, both Saxon and Swiss, the Reformers in Scotland and Protestant sectarian leaders in many lands since the sixteenth century, severed their connexion with the Church of the past, and avowedly worked out a Theology *de novo* from the Bible and organised a new Church, guided by their own private judgment and deliberately setting aside Ecclesiastical tradition. In England, on the other hand, the fundamental principle of the Reformers was the continuity of the Church from Apostolic times, and their constant appeal was to continuous Ecclesiastical tradition from the Primitive Church and the early Fathers. Hence in this country no free hand was laid on the Faith of our fathers, and no break occurred either in the Episcopal Succession or in the Liturgy. In preaching the Word of God, *i.e.* in setting forth the Divine Revelation to men, the Church takes its stand upon the firm ground of Holy Scripture, interpreting the written Word by the rule of the Creeds of undivided Christendom, the model of the Primitive Church, and the writings of the Fathers.

The Church has authority in controversies of faith,<sup>1</sup> and the authoritative teaching of the Church is set forth by the consentient testimony of the Church as a whole, and in the case of certain fundamental truths also by particular definitions of Œcumenical Councils. For some Articles of the Faith necessary to be believed have been formally defined, and such formal definitions are given in the decrees on doctrine of Councils accounted Œcumenical. It is not of course claimed that definitions on matters of faith promulgated in Conciliar decrees add any new Revelation to that already received by the Church, but they set forth, elucidate, and guard from misconception, the Faith once for all delivered. Such decrees of Councils are guaranteed to us as setting forth the mind of the Spirit, and therefore as promulgating Divine Truth on matters of faith, by the consentient testimony of Christendom as a whole to them. It is the reception of

<sup>1</sup> Art. xx.



its decrees by the Catholic Church dispersed throughout the world which furnishes to us the proof of the Œcumenicity of a Council, and stamps its decisions as an authoritative setting out of the Divine Revelation committed to the Church's charge.<sup>1</sup> The ultimate authority in matters of faith is, therefore, Catholic consent. By this Ecclesiastical definitions are authenticated, just as by it also (as we had occasion to show at some length above) the Canonical Scriptures are authenticated as the written Word of God. This Catholic consent has such value, because to the Church as a whole belong the promises of the indwelling Spirit of Truth to abide for ever,<sup>2</sup> that the Church may be the pillar and ground of the Truth.<sup>3</sup>

The first note of the Church, then, viewed as an institution working through, for, and amongst men, is the preaching of the pure Word of God—the setting forth of the Divine Revelation committed to her charge. The Church's office is therefore, in the first place, *prophetic*. She is a *dogmatic institution*, proclaiming to men a definite message from and concerning God. This she does both by her authorisation and interpretation of the books of Scripture, of which she is the witness and keeper,<sup>4</sup> and by her authoritative definitions of doctrine contained in the Catholic Creeds, and in decisions of Œcumenical Councils on matters of faith. Objections, however, are not unfrequently brought against this teaching office of the Church. Her right to set out doctrines as Divinely revealed Truth, and as necessary to be believed by her children, is questioned in different quarters and on

<sup>1</sup> The Councils of Nicæa (325), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431), and Chalcedon (451) are rightly accounted Œcumenical Councils, because their decrees on matters of faith have been generally received by the whole Church. The English Church at the Reformation reverently accepted these four Councils, and the Reformers took their decisions as standards of sound doctrine. *Stat. I. Eliz. I.* provided that nothing was to be accounted heresy except that which had been so adjudged “by the authority of the Canonical Scriptures, or by the first four General Councils.”

<sup>2</sup> S. John xiv. 16.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Art. xx.

various grounds. It may be instructive to consider briefly some of the objections most commonly urged.

It is objected against the setting forth of doctrine on matters of faith with authority, as by the Church in her Creeds, that it is intellectually oppressive. The preaching of a Divine Revelation as necessary to be believed is regarded as, in effect, bringing man into intellectual bondage, and the Creeds—the form of sound words embodying the teaching thus authoritatively set forth—are stigmatised as “tombstones on the grave of thought.” Some further raise a prejudice against the Church’s doctrine by harping on the word “dogma,” a term which, in the popular and unreasoning mind, carries with it associations of intellectual narrowness and obstinacy of temper. By such objectors any definite Theological teaching is represented as an incubus on thought and a hindrance to free inquiry. A modern writer belonging to this class of objectors has not hesitated to speak of the Creeds authorised by Catholic consent as “the idols of unfledged intellects, but the stumbling-block or the scorn of the penetrating and conscientious, barriers to the progress of truth, and usurpation on the prerogatives both of reason and its Author.”<sup>1</sup> Now the word dogma, which is sometimes found a powerful instrument for casting odium on the Church’s message, is, after all, when we come to examine it dispassionately at close quarters, a very harmless word. It simply signifies a precise statement of ascertained truth in any department of human inquiry, whether natural science, philosophy, or theology. Will it be seriously maintained (for this is what the objection to Church doctrine really amounts to) that in religion nothing can be certainly known as true, or that a truth discovered and known ought not to be formulated in words for fear of forestalling further independent inquiry? Shall we accept such a conclusion, or shall we be tempted to think that George Eliot is right when she traces the tirades so commonly heard against Creeds and Confessions to “a bigotry against any clearly defined opinions, a lack

<sup>1</sup> W. B. CLILLOW, *Sunshine and Shadows*, p. 115.

of coherent thought, a spongy texture of mind that gravitates strongly to nothing, the one thing it is staunch for being the utmost liberty of private haziness"? Now the vital question is, "Do we, in theology as in other departments of human reasoning and inquiry, recognise the existence of objective truth?" If there were no such thing as objective truth the position which we are criticising might be sustained. But, as S. Augustine well points out, in theology as in other spheres of human intellectual activity, the first necessary thing in order to a healthy exercise of the mind is the removal of the despair of truth. Truth does not exist merely in the subjective individual appreciation of it, so that what is truth for one may be a lie or delusion for another, but is objective. It is not merely the assertion or the inculcation of a truth, but its actual existence, which, in effect, limits—or if there is to be sound thought should limit—that absolute freedom of thought which is only another name for absolute ignorance. No man in his senses thinks of treating other branches of human inquiry and study as it is proposed that we should treat Theology. Men do not, for example, in natural science assume that there is to be perpetual investigation and no ascertained result, each one approaching the whole study *de novo* for himself individually, with an utter disregard of the traditions of the science, and refraining from stating his results lest he should limit freedom of inquiry for such students as may come after him. When a dogma of science is enunciated, when a law in mechanics or astronomy is stated, or an axiom in Euclid, no one thinks of complaining that freedom of thought is thereby unfairly limited. On the contrary, a really free inquiry is thereby stimulated, because the minds of learners are, by enunciation of ascertained objective truth, delivered from snares into which they might fall, and are given a good start; they are set free to pursue their study on right lines and in such a way that progress is secured and that their study is fruitful in result. Of course, in any such study progress and ascertainment of truth limits thought; but unlimited thought is equivalent to entire

ignorance. Just so it is in Theology. "The Truth shall make you free." The definite doctrines enunciated by the Church, when she proclaims her message as the Word of God to men, are the statement of fundamental objective truth, the recognition of which is necessary if there is to be any knowledge on man's part of things Divine, or any progress in the study of the things of God and in the religious life. The demand that there should be no recognised Christian doctrine, that the knowledge of the deep things of God attested by the general consent of the whole Church should be kept in vague solution lest inquiring minds should be biassed is, on the face of it, preposterous. If such demand were conceded religious progress would be practically impossible. The proposal that every religious man should set up anew, on his own narrow basis of subjective religious feeling, is one of the most absurd ever made. The Revelation we inherit from the past is not prejudice, but growing faculty of insight. It is by the acceptance of duly attested results, and the acting upon them in faith, that progress in the spiritual sphere is impossible. Did not the Jews accumulate the results of their prophetic teaching through long generations of alternating prosperity, adversity, and exile, before the time came at which the Christian Revelation became possible? And can we reasonably entertain any other theory but that this long education was expressly given in order that a new spiritual power might be developed, and further knowledge of Divine truth attained by God's ancient people, and through them by all mankind? The objection, then, to the promulgation of definite doctrine by the Church, which we have been considering, is found to be altogether unreasonable and unscientific. The claim that we should, in Theology, stand as individuals absolutely alone, and make each one his own subjective Creed, is absurd :—

"We are not single, age to age  
Is linked; and Truth's high heritage  
Is the slow fruit of bended knees  
Through the long growth of centuries."

Again, it is sometimes said that authoritative proclamation of doctrine and inculcation of dogma have been productive of more harm than good; that the disputes entailed have divided and kept asunder those who should have been united, so that in place of a united Christendom we are confronted with the lamentable spectacle of bigots fighting for forms of faith. To any such stricture a threefold answer might be given:—

1. By a clear and impartial thinker the distinction will always be observed between theology and the temper of theologians. A statement of doctrine, or a proposition, in itself perfectly just and true, and such as makes for harmony and unity, may be, and (let it be frankly admitted) sometimes has been, diffused or defended by methods that are unfair or open to objection. But it does not at all follow that a doctrine is to be blamed, or that the principle of dogmatic teaching is faulty, because the adherents and preachers of doctrine have not always shown the best possible spirit in presenting it to others. It should not be forgotten, too, that a contentious and arrogant temper is not a monopoly of champions of the orthodox faith, as some would apparently give us to understand, but has been as conspicuously manifested by upholders of latitudinarian opinions. Want of consideration and lack of charity are, unfortunately, faults that all are prone to, and as a matter of fact will be found to have been pretty evenly distributed on either side in any given controversy.

2. But the evils of controversy on matters of faith are capable of being grossly overstated. Controversy is often, in the nature of things, found to be inevitable, owing to the perception of various and apparently conflicting aspects of truth by varying types of the human mind. In such cases controversy, in spite of some attendant evils, renders good service in the long run, because through it more complete and accurately balanced statements on the subject in question are eventually brought out than could, so far as we can see, be otherwise attained. It may be pointed out, too, that the form of much of the teaching contained in the New Testa-

ment itself, as, for example, in some of the most famous Epistles of S. Paul, was shaped by the keen and often bitter controversy in which the Apostle was at the time of writing involved. It should not, therefore, be a matter of wonder, still less need it be made an objection against Christian doctrine, if we find that later controversies have been unavoidable in order to vindicate the true interpretation of the Apostle's words.

3. But if we carefully examine the matter, it will at once be evident that it is by no means the case that disputes on matters of faith have been the only, or the most fruitful, causes of interruption of communion between professing Christians. The controversies which have led to breaches of the Church's unity have at least quite as often been upon matters of discipline,<sup>1</sup> or upon the relation of the Church to the civil power, or concerned with a question of government and jurisdiction, such as that of the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome.<sup>2</sup>

A third objection to definite doctrine, which yet remains for us to notice, is based upon a supposed antithesis between doctrine and practice. It is this false antithesis that lies at the root of the demand sometimes made in our own times, that preachers of Christianity should leave dogmas alone and content themselves with inculcating ethics and morals apart from the distinctive doctrinal teaching which, as a matter of history, has characterised Christianity throughout the ages. But those who take this line and invite us to tear up our Creeds, either do not understand, or have somewhat unaccountably forgotten, that doctrine and practice, Creed and character, are intimately related as foundation and superstructure, so that there can be no secure structure of just deeds unless the underlying thought be sound and firm. A man's practice is bound in the long run to correspond with his Creed, *i.e.* with what he believes in his heart—not necessarily with what

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* the Novatian and Donatist schisms.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* the rupture between England and Rome in the reign of Henry VIII.



he says he believes—his life is, as has been well said, the picture-book of his Creed. In their origin and growth Christian doctrine and Christian practice were not separate. The dogmas of the Church are not puzzling formulæ that were invented and worked out in dark ages by recluses in their studies without reference to practical daily life in the world. To take an example; it was not simply by process of philosophical speculation as to the nature of God that the Church formulated the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, but it was rather by the path of experience, for the truth of Three Persons in one God was found to underlie practical Christianity. The Church was sure that Christ is a Divine Person; that is implied in its very life, and to surrender belief in His Divinity would have been to give up all its power in this world and all its hope of the world to come. The Church was likewise sure that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person. This was no mere abstract theory, but a belief bound up with its very life. To surrender it would have been to forfeit the great promises of Christ, to deny the mainspring of its daily work in the world, to lose all the courage and strength for conflict with evil which comes from the assurance that a Divine Person has His home in the Church and in the individual life of Christian men. Holding fast to these beliefs taught by daily experience, and at the same time retaining the great fundamental truth of the Unity of God, the Church was obliged to arrive at the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, unless it would be content to deny its own life and ignore the evidence of its triumphs. In stating the doctrine the Church could echo the words of S. Paul, "We speak that we do know." When we consider the matter in this way we see how unreasonable it is for men, especially for professing Christians, to look with suspicion on dogmatic teaching. The Christian daily life (as it is set forth in the New Testament) is nothing less than a life of communion with Christ, a life hid with Him in God, a Crucifixion with Him to the world, a continual yielding of ourselves to do the Father's will, sustained by the power of the indwelling Spirit. The Church thus preaches a life which

nothing but a supernatural power can sustain, and how can the Church preach it without appealing to the great supernatural realities upon which its fabric rests? It is, therefore, altogether futile and idle to dream of retaining the moral tone and sentiment of Christianity for practical purposes while shelving the doctrines of Christianity as out of date. Historically, the development of the moral tone of modern civilisation has been the outcome of long inculcation of the doctrines of the Christian faith, and many who have, perhaps, for themselves individually rejected formal belief in the Creed of the Church, yet unconsciously owe to its teaching all that is high and ennobling in their moral and ethical theories and conceptions. We may be perfectly sure that this tone and this sentiment, which men rightly prize and would fain retain, would in a world constituted as ours is, speedily evaporate if left to themselves and cut off from principles of doctrine in which they are rooted, and which it has ever been, and must ever be, a distinguishing mark of the Church to preach to men as the Pure Word of God.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CHURCH AS MINISTER OF THE SACRAMENTS

IF the Church is to meet the needs of mankind, not only must she point out the way of salvation and declare the will of God to man by her doctrine, she must also impart the strength which fallen human nature needs in order that it may correspond with the Divine Will, and walk stedfastly in the way that leads to eternal life. As regards truth, morals, and worship, the New Dispensation differs from the Old Covenant only in degree and not in kind. But the distinguishing feature of the Dispensation of the Holy Spirit is the gift of a new power—the grace won for man through the Incarnation and Atonement of the Son of God. Whatever may be said of Christianity as a Revelation of new teaching, it is even more a Revelation of vital force, of power to carry out teaching in life. The Gospel message is not only the wisdom of God, but the power of God;<sup>1</sup> grace as well as truth came by Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> The bestowal of grace, therefore, through the media which God has appointed, must always be a note of the Christian Church, viewed as an institution working through, for, and amongst men.

It will first be necessary to make clear what is meant by a Sacrament. The meanings of *sacramentum* in classical Latin were apparently two—(1) sometimes the word is used to denote pecuniary recognisances deposited by litigants, and (2) it is also used for the military oath of allegiance and obedience taken by a soldier to his commander. Agreeably

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 24.

<sup>2</sup> S. John i. 17.

with this latter meaning the word is applied several times by Tertullian to the Christian oath of allegiance in Baptism.<sup>1</sup> But though we can thus indicate a few examples of the use of the word in a sense approaching its classical one, the main import of the word, as used by Ecclesiastical writers, is entirely changed, and it appears simply as an equivalent of the Greek *μυστήριον*—mystery,<sup>2</sup> as for example frequently in the writings of S. Cyprian. The word, then, naturally came to be applied to solemn external rites of religion, more or less secret, and with deep spiritual significance, and having their analogy with the “mysteries” of Paganism. Thus Tertullian<sup>3</sup> and Cyprian<sup>4</sup> both are wont to speak of Baptism and the Eucharist as Mysteries (*Sacramenta*). Many centuries, however, elapsed before the term Sacrament was definitely restricted to those seven rites which from the twelfth century onwards it became the custom to define as the Sacraments of the Church. Since Sacrament simply means *mystery* it is capable of a very wide signification, and might be applied to *any external sign of a sacred thing*, or outward representation of a spiritual reality. “In a general acceptation the name of a Sacrament may be attributed to anything whereby an holy thing is signified.”<sup>5</sup> Using the word in this wide sense S. Augustine writes: “A visible sacrifice therefore is a sacrament, or sacred sign of an invisible sacrifice.”<sup>6</sup> As late as the middle of the twelfth century we still find the word used

<sup>1</sup> *De Corona*, xiii.; *De Idololatria*, vi.

<sup>2</sup> In the Vulgate *e.g.* *Sacramentum* is used to represent *μυστήριον* in Wisd. ii. 22; Eph. v. 32; 1 Tim. iii. 16. The earlier Latin Versions also have *sacramentum* in some places where the Vulgate gives *mysterium*, *e.g.* Rom. xvi. 25; 1 Cor. xiii. 2. So also Tertullian uses *sacramentum* in the sense of “mystery” (see *De Jejuniis*, iii.). *Mysteries* is still the recognised and usual name in the Eastern Church for the ordinances that we Westerns call *Sacraments*.

<sup>3</sup> *De Baptismo*, i. 12; *De Virginibus Velandis*, ii.; *De Anima*, i.; *De Corona*, iii.

<sup>4</sup> *Epistles*, lxiii., lxx.

<sup>5</sup> *Homily of Common Prayer and Sacraments*, p. 377 (ed. S.P.C.K.).

<sup>6</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, x. 5.

with a very wide application. Hugo of S. Victor (d. 1141) mentions no less than thirty Sacraments, amongst which Baptism and the Holy Eucharist occupy the foremost place. Peter Lombard (d. 1164) seems to have been the first Theologian to limit the term Sacrament as a proper title to seven characteristic ordinances of the Christian Dispensation. This restriction of the application of the name rests upon a further definition of its meaning and a limitation of its connotation. Peter Lombard understands by a Sacrament not merely a sign, but *an effectual sign* of grace. He therefore uses the term to indicate particularly those ordinances which are *signs of grace in such a sense as to represent and bring about the thing signified*.<sup>1</sup> The limitation of the title Sacrament to the Seven Ordinances of Baptism, the Eucharist, Confirmation, Orders, Matrimony, Penance, and Unction was later officially adopted in the West at the Council of Florence (1439), and again at the Council of Trent (1564).<sup>2</sup> The Eastern Church also in similar fashion limits the corresponding Greek term "Mystery" in a special sense to the same seven characteristic ordinances of the Church which have sacramental character.

In the formularies of our own Church, and in the writings of our Reformers, though the sacramental character of none of these seven rites is denied, and though several of them are, in fact, directly called Sacraments,<sup>3</sup> yet Baptism and the

<sup>1</sup> Peter Lombard's definition of Sacrament is as follows: "Sacramentum est invisibilis gratiæ visibilis forma, ejusdem gratiæ imaginem gerens, et causa existens."

<sup>2</sup> The Tridentine definition of a Sacrament runs thus: "A Sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible grace, instituted for our justification."—*Catechism of the Council of Trent*, II. i. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.*: "The Sacrament of Matrimony knitteth man and wife in perpetual love."—*Homily of Swearing*, part i. p. 74 (ed. S.P.C.K.). And again in the *Homily of Common Prayer and Sacraments*: "Though the Ordering of Ministers hath his visible sign and promise, yet it lacks the promise of remission of sin, as all other Sacraments besides (the two above named) do. Therefore neither it, nor any other Sacrament else, be such Sacraments as Baptism and the Communion are"—(p. 377).

Holy Eucharist are singled out from the rest, put on a higher level, and called emphatically *the Sacraments of the Gospel*.<sup>1</sup> The ground upon which this distinction is made is that in the case of these two ordinances alone is Christ Himself, in the Gospel, recorded to have expressly instituted and commanded the outward sign. Other ordinances with sacramental character, *i.e.* having visible signs of spiritual grace, such as Confirmation, Orders, Matrimony, and Penance,<sup>2</sup> being both Primitive and Catholic, were at the Reformation given a due and honoured place and their ministration is provided for in the Prayer-book, but those ordinances whose outward signs were expressly commanded by Christ were naturally and rightly given the chiefest place.<sup>3</sup> Thus, *in its most particular signification*, the term Sacrament is limited to these, and in this sense it is explained in the Anglican formularies. In the Church Catechism, for example, a Sacrament is defined as "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, *ordained by Christ Himself*." Similarly in the Homilies the *exact signification* of Sacrament is declared to be "a visible sign *expressly commanded in the New Testament*, whereunto is annexed the promise of free forgiveness of our sin, and of our holiness and joining in Christ."<sup>4</sup>

When we speak of the Church's system as Sacramental,

<sup>1</sup> Art. xxv.

<sup>2</sup> The inward grace of the Sacramental ordinance of Penance is indeed promised by our Lord Himself (S. John xx. 22, 23), but "although Absolution hath the promise of forgiveness of sin, yet by express word of the New Testament it hath not this promise annexed and tied to the visible sign, which is imposition of hands. For this visible sign, I mean laying on of hands, is not expressly commanded in the New Testament to be used in Absolution, as the visible signs in Baptism and the Lord's Supper are; and therefore Absolution is no such Sacrament as Baptism and the Communion are."—*Homily of Common Prayer and Sacraments*, pp. 376, 377.

<sup>3</sup> "Those five commonly called Sacraments . . . yet have not like nature of Sacraments with Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God."—Art. xxv.

<sup>4</sup> *Homily of Common Prayer and Sacraments*, p. 376.



then, we mean that in her system Divine grace is conveyed through Divinely appointed outward and visible channels. The Church's dispensation of grace to her members centres especially round the observances which the Apostles were directly charged by the Lord to practise and administer.

That the Church uses "outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace" need not cause us any difficulty, because :—

Even in the eternal nature of God Himself, apart from His relation to created things, we may trace the operation of a Sacramental principle by the light of what is revealed to us as to the Being of God in the New Testament. God always by His very nature wishes to declare Himself. From all eternity, even before the universe was made, He has been ever so doing, by the eternal generation of the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity. This eternal generation of the Son is of a Sacramental character. For does not the significance of the title *Logos*<sup>1</sup> (Word), given to the eternal Son, amount to this—that as a word declares thought, so the Son, or Word, of God is eternally something outward to declare God Himself, Who is hidden. The Son is the *εἰκὼν*, the image, the outward representation of the invisible God.<sup>2</sup>

Again, Natural Religion, when we examine it, is seen to be dependent upon the Sacramental principle. It is through the outward and visible form of things created that men may learn something of the Creator Himself, Who is invisible. "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity."<sup>3</sup> The visible creation, therefore, may truly be called Sacramental, being an outward sign of the invisible God, so that we might, without injustice, characterise the study of nature as a means of grace to man.

Further, in God's Revelation of Himself through Christ we have a more particular example of Divine working upon the Sacramental principle. We might perhaps fancy, if left to our

<sup>1</sup> S. John. i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Col. i. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. i. 20.

own imaginings, that in His dealings with mankind God would confine Himself to direct spiritual communications, made without outward sign or material medium of any kind. When, however, we consider, not what God might have done, but what He has in fact done, we find that He has willed to reveal Himself, and to impart gifts and graces to man in a Sacramental manner. Through that nature which He shares with us, and which He used as an outward sign and channel of grace by uniting it with His own Divine Person, the Son of God bestows His grace upon us. The teaching which the Word of God willed to impart to men was given through human lips. The works of mercy which He wrought were indeed the outcome of His Divine Power, but that power worked sacramentally; it worked through the outward sign and medium of His human body. Scripture makes it perfectly plain that it was through our nature which He had assumed that the power of Christ's Godhead went forth to heal and restore. It was upon contact with His sacred body that virtue went forth and healed them all.<sup>1</sup> So too with the spiritual grace of remission of sin. It was through the indwelling of the Divine fulness in a bodily form in Jesus<sup>2</sup> that the Divine grace of Absolution passed to sinful men. It was as Son of Man that Christ claimed power on earth to forgive sins.<sup>3</sup> Thus the whole life and work of the Incarnate Son of God, His teaching, His deeds of compassion, His gifts of spiritual grace and bestowal of pardon and peace on the penitent, stand as the great crowning example of Divine working upon the Sacramental principle. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."<sup>4</sup>

In the light of what has been said, it is clear that any *a priori* presumption against a Sacramental system as God's normal way of working in His Church breaks down completely. When God uses Sacraments in His Church His

<sup>1</sup> S. Luke vi. 19; viii. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Col. ii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. ix. 6, 8.

<sup>4</sup> S. John i. 14.

action is most suited to His own eternal Nature. He acts upon the same principle in accordance with which He acts in creation, and the very basis upon which the Church rests—the Incarnation of the Son of God and His work in our material nature—is itself Sacramental in character.

Having seen that Sacramental working is most consonant with God's own eternal Nature, and with His method of working in the Revelation He has given us of Himself, alike in nature and in grace, we may also follow another line of argument and show how the Sacramental system of the Church is justified and confirmed by a true appreciation of the permanence, the dignity, and the spiritual capacity of the material creation. If the relation of matter and spirit be not rightly understood; if man is regarded as a spirit temporarily encumbered by a material organism of which he will be happily, and for ever, rid in the next world; if by a deistic conception the Supreme be separated in our thought as far as possible from the universe that He has made, and pure spirit be dissociated from, and set in opposition to, matter and body—then naturally a Sacramental system will seem to us foolishness, and will prove a stumbling-block. But, on the other hand, God's choice of outward and visible means whereby to impress spiritual realities and convey spiritual graces to man is commended to us by the true and Scriptural account of the mutual relationship that subsists between man and the natural order of which he forms a part, between body and spirit. For the material creation is not in Scripture separated by a great gulf, and far removed, from God, but is represented as subsisting in Him.<sup>1</sup> All the works of nature are pervaded by the Divine Spirit.<sup>2</sup> The Creator, though transcendent, is also immanent in His universe and ever works therein,<sup>3</sup> manifesting His eternal power and Divinity by the visible material creation.<sup>4</sup> Again, as regards man's own nature, a material body is not to be regarded as an unfortunate accident, or as a prison for man's free spirit, but it is an integral part of his

<sup>1</sup> Col. i. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. civ.

<sup>3</sup> S. John v. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. i. 20.

complex nature. The material creation, and man's own body by which he lives and moves in that creation, are alike in the Creator's judgment "very good,"<sup>1</sup> and are in His intention destined to be permanent. Though the creation has been, through the entrance of sin, subjected to vanity, it awaits the manifestation of the sons of God with eager expectation.<sup>2</sup> At the restoration of all things the material creation is to be regenerated and purified; man's body is to be fitted as a spiritual body for a glorious immortality;<sup>3</sup> and the material order, with which his existence is bound up, is not to pass away, but to be remodelled and adapted, as a new heavens and a new earth,<sup>4</sup> for the eternal habitation of the saints in bliss. In view of the permanence and dignity of the material creation, and of man's relation to it, as thus set forth in Scripture, the Divine working through Sacraments fills a natural place.

Again, a Sacramental system, a system in which God works by outward and visible signs of spiritual grace, is peculiarly fitted to the case of man, with his twofold nature both material and spiritual. A religion to be thoroughly adapted to man as he is in his present condition must have its outward forms by which to appeal to his bodily senses, as well as its inward spiritual grace, signified and conveyed by these forms, and by which his spirit is regenerated and strengthened or sanctified. Unless the Christian Religion took account of the material element in our nature, as well as the spiritual, we should surely be justified in regarding it as a religion unsuited for the human race.

In considering the purpose and use of Sacraments we will begin with their lowest and most obvious signification. If they are nothing else Sacraments are at least this—they are certain ceremonies performed by a visible Society. Baptism is the solemn rite of initiation to membership in the Christian Society; the Eucharist is the continual pledge of the union of the members. Thus the first aspect of the Sacraments

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i. 31.    <sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 19-21.    <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 44.

<sup>4</sup> 2 S. Peter iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1 *et seqq.*

which forces itself upon our notice is their evidential and confessional import.

We take first, then, the evidential view of the Sacraments. Considered in this aspect they are historical memorials of great facts about Christ, and abiding testimony to His life and work. The celebration of the Eucharist on the first day of the week by the Christian Church, from the earliest times down to our own, without interruption, affords proof to the world that Jesus Christ verily lived, taught, and died, and not only so, but also testifies to His prophetic insight in the institution of that Sacrament. In a yet more striking manner does it testify to the truth of His Resurrection from the dead, with the weekly commemoration of which it has always been closely associated. If Christ did not truly rise from the dead, then the Eucharist would only serve as a reminder of the failure of His work, and of the utter disappointment of the hopes of the first disciples;<sup>1</sup> but in that case it would be practically impossible to account for the general acceptance and observance of the rite, and for the extraordinary hold it has taken upon man, completely superseding, as it has done, ancient sacrificial systems both Jewish and Gentile.<sup>2</sup> Viewed in this light Sacraments form a monument to Jesus Christ, showing forth to the world at large,<sup>3</sup> and that in no uncertain way, the reality and the power of His life, His death, and His rising again from the dead.

Sacraments being thus plain testimonies to the living Christ as a guide and leader of men it is manifest that those who participate in them do thereby profess their allegiance to Him, and pledge themselves to follow Him. That Baptism was, in Apostolic times, regarded as an acknowledgment on the part of a convert of allegiance to a new Master seems to be implied by S. Paul's manner of speaking in his First Epistle to the Corinthians when he says, "Were ye baptized into the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but

<sup>1</sup> S. Luke xxiv. 17, 21.

<sup>2</sup> See MACLEAR, *Evidential Value of the Holy Eucharist*, pp. 260 et seqq.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 26.

Crispus and Gaius: lest any should say that I had baptized into mine own name.”<sup>1</sup> The same view of the Christian Sacrament also underlies S. Paul’s implicit comparison of it to the passage of the Red Sea in the same Epistle, when he speaks of the Israelites as “baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea”;<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* he considers that they, by following Moses through the sea, pledged themselves to follow him as their leader.<sup>3</sup> The idea of an oath of allegiance to a leader or captain is naturally conveyed by the formal renunciation of Satan and profession of allegiance to Christ, which have from very early times been associated with the Baptismal ceremony,<sup>4</sup> and our Anglican Baptismal Office emphasises this aspect of the Sacrament when it directs that the newly baptized, at the moment of leaving the font, shall be signed with the sign of the Cross “in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ’s faithful soldier and servant unto his life’s end.”

Since by Sacraments men profess their allegiance to Christ, it follows that such rites have a further significance. They serve as badges or tokens differentiating Christians from other men. Thus in the Articles Baptism is said to be in the first place “a sign of profession and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened.”<sup>5</sup> A favourite comparison with some of the Reformers of the sixteenth century was to liken Sacraments to the badges of captains in war. Calvin alludes to the opinion that Baptism is a badge or mark by which we profess our religion before men, as soldiers bear the insignia of their commander.<sup>6</sup> Similarly Zwingli compares the Sacraments<sup>7</sup> to the wearing of a national badge as a mark of difference: “A

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 13-15.      <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. x. 2.      <sup>3</sup> Cf. Exod. xiv. 31.

<sup>4</sup> The renunciation of Satan is alluded to and expounded by S. Cyril of Jerusalem in his *Lectures on the Mysteries*.      <sup>5</sup> Art. xxvii.

<sup>6</sup> CALVIN, *Institutes*, IV. xv. 1.

<sup>7</sup> In his treatise *De Baptismo*.



Sacrament," he writes, "is an outward symbol by which we testify what we are and what our duty is, just as one who wears a white cross testifies that he is a Swiss."

But this evidential and confessional view of the Sacraments, though it has, as we have indicated, its own very important place and ought to be fully recognised, is altogether inadequate if it be taken for a complete account of the matter. Owing to a recoil from Mediæval superstitions connected with the Sacraments of the Church, Zwingli was led to deny to Baptism and the Eucharist any other significance than their utility as signs of profession, and to maintain that outward forms could in no way affect or influence man's inner spiritual life; so that Sacraments, in his view, could neither confirm faith,<sup>1</sup> nor serve as channels of grace.<sup>2</sup> Not a few Protestant sects tend towards this Zwinglian view of the Sacraments, but it was emphatically repudiated by our English Reformers,<sup>3</sup> and is expressly declared to be inadequate in the formularies of the Anglican Church.<sup>4</sup>

We pass, then, to consider the higher aspects of the Christian Sacraments. Besides being badges or tokens of our profession they are seals or pledges of Divine grace given to us. A Sacrament is something outward and visible intended to bring home to us the reality of the spiritual and unseen gift of God. Just as our Lord, in the healing of the paralytic at Capernaum, performed the miracle of restoration to bodily health, and

<sup>1</sup> "It is impossible that any outward thing should confirm and strengthen man's faith, which is an inward thing."—ZWINGLI, *De Baptismo*.

<sup>2</sup> "All Sacraments are so far from conferring grace that they do not even convey or dispense it."—ZWINGLI, *Fidei Ratio*, § 7.

<sup>3</sup> "The Sacraments with us are not bare signs. . . . Far be such a belief from the most unlearned Christian."—Bishop HOOPER in *Original Letters*, vol. i. pp. 47, 48. "In all ages the devil hath stirred up some light heads to esteem the Sacraments but lightly, as to be empty and bare signs."—Bishop LATIMER quoted in *Ridley's Works*, p. 114. "I never said that Christ gave only a figure of His Body."—Bishop RIDLEY in his examination at Oxford (*Works*, p. 234).

<sup>4</sup> "Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession."—Art. xxv.

bade men argue from the unquestionable and tangible reality of the cure to a like reality of the unseen gift of remission of sin, which was so much harder to realise;<sup>1</sup> so by the physical processes of the Sacraments—the outward cleansing of the body in the Baptismal water, and the bodily nourishment derived from the Eucharistic elements—the Church impresses upon her children the reality of the corresponding, though unseen, spiritual graces. Sacraments are thus outward representations, signs, or seals,<sup>2</sup> of invisible grace. By them God's good will towards us,<sup>3</sup> and His promises of spiritual grace, are visibly signed and sealed,<sup>4</sup> so as to confirm our faith, and give us assurance that the things signified are truly enjoyed by us. We may recall that this aspect of the Sacraments is duly recognised in the formularies of our Church. In Article xxv. Sacraments are spoken of as being "certain sure witnesses of grace," and in the Catechism we are taught that the outward and visible sign is "a pledge to assure us" of the inward and spiritual grace, and the refreshing of our bodies by the Bread and Wine of the Eucharist is referred to as an acted parable of the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ.

The highest and mysterious aspect of the Sacraments remains to be noticed. The conception of them as seals or pledges of grace has been dwelt upon, but our view of their purpose and use, and our estimate of their place in the system of the Church, would be very imperfect unless we go a step farther and recognise in them *effectual* signs of grace.<sup>5</sup> The Scriptural, Primitive, and Catholic doctrine of the Sacraments, and the conception of them deliberately retained by the English Church amid all the controversy of the Reformation period, is that they are not empty signs, not untrue figures of things

<sup>1</sup> S. Mark ii. 10, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Etymologically there is close connexion between *sign* and *seal*. The Latin *sigillum* (seal) is formed from *signum* (sign), and from very ancient times it has been customary for a man to give his signature to a document by affixing his seal.

<sup>3</sup> Art. xxv.

<sup>4</sup> Art. xxvii.

<sup>5</sup> Art. xxv.

absent,<sup>1</sup> but that through them as channels, or by them as instruments,<sup>2</sup> the Holy Spirit works and spiritual graces are conferred upon mankind. Sacraments, accordingly, are not merely signs or pledges of grace which, if given at all, is conferred independently of them. This we may call the Puritan view, and in principle it is akin to the theory that the true Church is invisible. It is the view which finds expression in the Confessions of the Swiss Reformers in the sixteenth century,<sup>3</sup> and it is the conception which prevails in the generality of Protestant sects to-day. But the Church from Apostolic times, as the New Testament itself bears witness,<sup>4</sup> has set forth the Sacraments and ministered them to men as *effectual signs*, i.e. as means through which, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, are truly effected and conferred upon the members of the Body of Christ those graces of which they are the pledges and signs. As our Church Catechism puts it—the outward and visible sign, in the Sacraments of the Gospel, was ordained by Christ Himself, not only as a pledge to assure us of the inward and spiritual grace, but (and this is put first) *as a means whereby we receive the same*. This true view of the function of the Sacraments is in reality bound up with an adequate conception of the visible Church as a Divine Society, in which all the members are joined to a living Head Whose life they share through the activity of the Holy Spirit. For if

<sup>1</sup> “But thus much he must be sure to hold, that in the Supper of the Lord there is no vain ceremony, no bare sign, no untrue figure of a thing absent, but, as the Scripture saith, the table of the Lord, the bread and cup of the Lord, the memory of Christ, the annunciation of His death, yea, the communion of the Body and Blood of the Lord in a marvellous incorporation, which by the operation of the Holy Ghost, the very bond of our conjunction with Christ, is through faith wrought in the souls of the faithful.”—*Homily of the Worthy Receiving and reverent esteeming of the Sacrament*, p. 476 (ed. S. P. C. K.).

<sup>2</sup> Art. xxvii.

<sup>3</sup> “Those who have been baptized in early infancy God regenerates in childhood, or as they grow up to manhood, sometimes even in old age.”—*Consensus Tigurinus*, Art. xx.

<sup>4</sup> S. Mark xvi. 16; Acts ii. 38; 1 Cor. x. 16; Titus iii. 5; 1 S. Peter iii. 21.

the idea of the Church is but a human afterthought, overlaid upon the Divine plan of salvation, if the Church's existence is due mainly (or entirely) to considerations of expediency and policy, or if the Church is but an accidental collection of souls, then it would follow naturally enough that Sacraments can only be regarded as mere ceremonies—Baptism the entrance ceremony into the Society, and the Holy Communion a rite which keeps alive the sense of fellowship and commemorates a certain historical event. But, on the other hand, if we hold fast to the Scriptural conception of the Church as a Divine Society, an extension of the Incarnation,<sup>1</sup> then it is the continuation in the world of Divine Revelation and Divine operation through material means. Sacraments, as effectual signs of grace, are the natural acts of such a Society, for it is only in accordance with the principle of the Incarnation that gifts of Divine grace should be conferred through material channels. It is not strictly accurate, indeed, to speak of the Sacraments as conferring grace, though such expression has been formally adopted by the Church of Rome in defining her doctrine.<sup>2</sup> To be quite guarded in our language—they are instrumental rather than efficient causes of grace. It is God Himself Who confers grace, using the Sacraments of His own appointment as instruments or means by which to bestow His grace upon us. The wording of our Article xxv. is thus perfectly balanced and accurate when it affirms that the Sacraments are “effectual signs of grace by the which God doth work invisibly in us.”

The Sacraments are thus effectual on account of Christ's institution and promise,<sup>3</sup> and as they derive not any of their virtue from the human minister, so neither is Christ's blessed ordinance and promise made of none effect by any unworthiness on his part. Again, as the minister by personal worthiness

<sup>1</sup> This conception underlies S. Paul's treatment of the Church as the Body of Christ, and the expression is warranted by such passages as Eph. iv. 16; Col. ii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> See Canon vi. of Session vii. of the *Council of Trent*. “If any one shall say that the Sacraments do not confer the grace upon those who place no obstacle in the way . . . let him be anathema.”

<sup>3</sup> Art. xxvi.

or unworthiness can neither add to nor take away from the efficacy of the Sacraments, so neither does Christ's institution depend for its efficacy on the disposition of the receiver. It is true, of course, that the Sacraments can never act in a magical way as charms, so that the mere reception of the outward sign conveys the inward grace independently of a right disposition in the recipient.<sup>1</sup> Faith and due preparation are necessary on man's part in order that he may receive the blessing. Yet Sacramental grace has an objective reality; the gift is there in virtue of Christ's promise, whether we are worthy of it or no; our disposition, our faith, do not make the reality and efficacy of the Sacrament, they cannot create, but only appropriate the Divine gift. We may illustrate Christ's working through His Sacraments from His working in the days of His earthly ministry. The power of the Lord was present to heal<sup>2</sup> whether men believed in Him or no, but only those who had faith were able to appropriate the gift of healing.<sup>3</sup> Not, indeed, that men's faith created the Lord's presence amongst them or His power to heal, but when He said "thy faith hath saved thee,"<sup>4</sup> the meaning of course is that Christ's power, appropriated by faith, wrought the miracle of healing. "In the due ministration of the Sacraments God is present, working with His Word and Sacraments."<sup>5</sup>

We do not estimate, therefore, the perfection and efficacy of the Sacraments from the worthiness or unworthiness of the minister, or from the state of the receiver. We acknowledge that the Sacraments depend for their perfection upon the faith, the truth, and the goodness of God alone. The Sacraments remain true and perfect Sacraments, not only because they signify holy things, but because God offers also, through them, the things signified. This is the truth which the Scholastic Theologians of the Middle Ages expressed by the statement that grace is conferred through the Sacraments *ex opere operato*, by which they meant that grace is Divinely imparted to man,

<sup>1</sup> Art. xxix.

<sup>2</sup> S. Luke v. 17.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xiii. 58.

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke vii. 50; xviii. 42.

<sup>5</sup> CRANMER, *Answer to Gardiner, Works*, vol. iii. p. 38.

under the Gospel system, upon his due performance of the outward work or action to which God has attached the promise. The grace of new-birth and of our incorporation into Christ is bestowed through the outward act of Baptismal washing, and the spiritual partaking of Christ, whereby we continually dwell in Him and He in us, is granted to us through the reception of the consecrated elements in the Eucharist, because to these outward actions respectively Christ Himself in the New Testament has especially attached the promise of the corresponding blessing and grace.

From what has just been said a question naturally arises. When we say that God has attached the promise of grace to the performance of certain actions by man, *i.e.* to the Sacraments, do we imply that man cannot receive the promised grace in any other way than through the appointed channel, and that God does not confer grace except through the Sacraments? It is, of course, obvious that we cannot presume to limit the action of God or the operation of the grace of the Holy Spirit. God can, if He so wills, work without, as He works through, the media of His appointment. But, after all, to discuss what God could or might do may not always be very fruitful speculation for us. Naaman's speculation as to whether God might cleanse with the waters of Abana and Pharpar was idle and even presumptuous when the prophet had already indicated Jordan as God's chosen instrument. The important and vital question is not how God might act, or how we ourselves would prefer that He should, but rather how has God revealed to us that He does act? Has He attached the promise of His Blessing to the performance of any conditions on our part, and if so to what conditions? If the Christian Sacraments rest upon a Divine Revelation and have God's own promise of grace, it is manifest that, though in theory God may not be bound by them, we in practice are tied to them where they can be had. The Sacraments of the Gospel are *generally necessary to salvation*.<sup>1</sup> When, however, adopting the language

<sup>1</sup> *Church Catechism.*



of our Church, we thus speak of the Sacraments as necessary to salvation it is clear that we have in mind not a blind material necessity but a moral necessity. We could not, of course, imagine that God would insist upon the performance of certain conditions on man's part in cases where, owing to lack of opportunity or to adverse circumstances, such performance is altogether impossible.<sup>1</sup> But when the performance of the conditions is possible, where the Sacraments may be had, it is manifestly our part duly and worthily to use them in faith that God works in us through them. The Christian Religion brings to man not only teaching but grace.<sup>2</sup> As was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, as regards truth and morals Christianity differs from the preceding and preparatory dispensation only in degree. But the peculiar glory of the Dispensation of the Son of God is the bestowal of grace which He has won for man, and as that grace was won for us through outward and visible means—even through the assumption of flesh on the part of the Eternal Word and through the work which He performed in our nature—so it is bestowed and secured to us by outward and visible means, viz. the Sacraments of the Church. For Christianity is not only a revelation of man's right relation to God, a Divine announcement of his highest duty and of the true end of human life, but it is equally (and here we make mention of its peculiar characteristic) the establishment on earth of a visible system of means, through the faithful use of which men may have

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the Rubric in the *Order for the Communion of the Sick*: "But if a man, either by reason of extremity of sickness, or for want of warning in due time to the Curate, or for lack of company to receive with him, or by any other just impediment, do not receive the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, the Curate shall instruct him, that if he do truly repent him of his sins, and stedfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the Cross for him, and shed His Blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving Him hearty thanks therefore; he doth eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, although he do not receive the Sacrament with his mouth."

<sup>2</sup> S. John i. 17.

grace and strength to walk in right relation to God and realise for themselves the true end of life.

In connexion with this part of our subject some further discussion may be thought necessary, because there have not been wanting some who, with a devout, though surely mistaken, zeal for the entire spirituality of the Gospel dispensation, have supposed that it was not Christ's intention that the outward part of the Sacraments should be permanent or binding as forms or ceremonies on His followers who had received the inward grace, but were figures to help the weak and therefore ought not to be considered as of perpetual obligation in the Church which has received the gift of the Holy Spirit. This seems to be the view held in our own day by the Quakers, who regard the New Testament Sacraments as merely temporary figurative representations of certain great aspects of Christian truth.<sup>1</sup> We, on the contrary, hold that the Sacraments are of permanent obligation as the Lord's appointed means of grace, and our ground for so esteeming them and using them is that the general consent of the Christian Church has, from the very beginning, so held and ministered them. It may be admitted that some things that were said or commanded by Christ have chiefly (if not altogether) a local or temporal application; that some charges given and promises made were intended rather for the Apostles personally than for Christendom at large, and that while the principles underlying the Master's teaching are eternal, their immediate setting and particular form of statement are often local and temporal, having perhaps principally an historical interest, and in some cases needing historical study before due appreciation is possible. But if we ask which of our

<sup>1</sup> See *The Chief Principles of the Christian Religion as professed by the people called Quakers* (drawn up by Robert Barclay in 1678). "There is one baptism . . . and this baptism is a pure and spiritual thing, to wit the baptism of the Spirit and fire" (§ 12). "The communion of the Body and Blood of Christ is inward and spiritual . . . The breaking of bread by Christ with His disciples was a figure which they even used in the Church for a time, who had received the substance, for the cause of the weak" (§ 13).

Lord's commands were temporary and which must be regarded as binding upon ourselves, we have a sure and certain guide in the sense in which the Church universal has understood and acted upon them. We regard the Sacraments as of permanent obligation, then, for like reason that we repeat the Lord's Prayer continually. It might be asked by one who studied the New Testament apart from the history of the Church, When Christ instructed the Apostles "When ye pray say Our Father," was He simply meeting an immediate and temporary need of His followers then present, or was He providing a typical form of prayer for all time? All agree that the practical interpretation of the Catholic Church for eighteen hundred years has decided the question, has in fact made it an almost impossible one to ask. The question whether the Sacraments ordained by Christ are of permanent obligation should be for a Christian Churchman equally impossible. We repeat the prayer, we approach the Altar, not merely because the two sayings—"When ye pray say, Our Father" and "Do this in remembrance of Me"—were spoken to twelve men by Christ in the days of Pontius Pilate, but chiefly because, having been thus spoken, Christendom has ever held and taught the abiding nature of both commands.<sup>1</sup>

Again, if we compare the ground upon which the generally admitted obligation of Sunday observance rests with our reason for holding the permanent obligation of the Sacraments of the Gospel, it will be seen how very strong this reason is. There are only two, or at the most three, allusions in the New Testament to the marking of the first day of the week by a special observance, and in these there is no hint of its observance as a Sabbath at all after the Jewish manner.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. SPARROW SIMPSON, *Addresses on the Lord's Prayer*, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> The passages in question are Acts xx. 7, which specially connects the Eucharist with the first day of the week; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, which serves as a warrant for the Sunday offertory; and perhaps Rev. i. 10, if that passage be rightly interpreted as the earliest example of the application of the title Lord's Day to Sunday.

Neither the Lord Himself nor the Apostles anywhere command a Lord's Day observance. On the other hand, as faithful Jews, they are recorded as having kept the Jewish Sabbath, and it may be safely said that no one could, from the two or three hints in the New Testament, reason out the obligation of Lord's Day observance. The abolition of the Jewish Sabbath and the setting apart of the first day of the week as a Holy Day rests simply on the continuous custom of the Church from the earliest times; a custom so general and so distinctive that S. Ignatius of Antioch, writing in the earlier years of the second century, distinguishes Jewish and Christian life by Sabbath-keeping or Lord's Day observance as their most characteristic outward ceremonies.<sup>1</sup> For our Sunday observance we rely upon Ecclesiastical tradition only, but for our Sacraments we rest on unbroken Church custom which literally carries out express charges of the Lord to His Apostles.

Since the Sacraments of the Gospel thus rest upon the express command of Christ it is, of course, necessary that they should be ministered as He Himself ordered, otherwise they would not be His Sacraments at all, nor could those who used them in another way than that which He laid down fairly and rightly expect to secure for themselves the promised grace. Accordingly it is a note of the Church not merely to minister Sacraments, but to minister Christ's Sacraments as He Himself ordained them. "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which . . . the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."<sup>2</sup> However good the intention of men might be in ministering Sacraments, or however devout the reception, unless the conditions which the Lord laid down are observed, and the ceremonies instituted by Him performed, it is not the Christian Sacra-

<sup>1</sup> *Epistle to the Magnesians*, ix. Similarly S. Augustine says, "Either let us be Christians and keep the Lord's Day, or else turn Jews and keep the Sabbath."

<sup>2</sup> Art. xix.

ments at all that are administered, and if they are not administered we could not be sure that God would bestow the promised blessing. For the due effect of a Sacrament, therefore, two different conditions are necessary. On the one hand, in order that a Sacrament may have its proper efficacy, and that God may work in us by it,<sup>1</sup> there must be on our part the fulfilment of the subjective condition of faith and due preparation of heart, for in such only as worthily (*digne*) receive them have the Sacraments a wholesome effect and operation.<sup>2</sup> But, on the other hand, there is an objective condition, the performance of which is equally necessary to the perfection and efficacy of the Sacraments. They must not only be worthily (*digne*) received, but we must also take care that they are duly (*rite*) used,<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* that they are celebrated with the form and ceremony instituted by Christ and handed down and observed by His Church from the beginning, so that (as we read in the Homilies with particular reference to the Eucharist) “before all other things, this we must be sure of specially, that this Supper be in such wise done and ministered as our Lord and Saviour did and commanded to be done, as His holy Apostles used it, and the good fathers in the Primitive Church frequented it.”<sup>4</sup>

In the case of the Sacrament of Baptism the requisites for due ministration according to Christ’s ordinance are two:—

First there must be *the act of washing with water*. Such act is literally signified by the name of the Sacrament. The verb “to baptize” means, in New Testament language, “to wash,” and the cognate noun denotes the act of washing, whether by dipping or pouring. That immersion is not necessarily implied in the use of the word is clear from several cases where it occurs with reference to washing by pouring; *e.g.* it is applied in the Gospels to the customary Jewish washings before partaking of a meal.<sup>5</sup> It is probable

<sup>1</sup> Art. xxv.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Homily of the worthy receiving, etc., of the Sacrament*, pp. 473, 474 (ed. S.P.C.K.).

<sup>5</sup> S. Mark vii. 4; S. Luke xi. 38.

that S. John the Baptist immersed in Jordan those who came to him for baptism,<sup>1</sup> and immersion of converts was, so far as we can gather, the regular practice of the Church in Apostolic times. The example of the baptism of the Æthiopian eunuch by Philip the Deacon would seem to be a clear case in point.<sup>2</sup> There can be no doubt, too, that Baptism by immersion was the normal practice of the Primitive Church. Justin Martyr, after describing the preparation of converts for the reception of the Sacrament by instruction in the faith, and by prayer and fasting, goes on to speak of its administration: "They are brought," he says, "to a place where there is water, and are regenerated in the manner in which we ourselves were regenerated."<sup>3</sup> The passage indicates that pools or streams formed the baptisteries of the Church in those early times.<sup>4</sup> S. Cyril of Jerusalem is more explicit, and in his Catechetical Lectures describes and explains at length the ritual of Baptism by threefold immersion as practised at Jerusalem in his day. Addressing those who had recently been baptized, he says: "Ye were led by the hand to the holy pool of Divine Baptism as Christ was taken from the Cross to the Sepulchre, and each one was asked whether he believed in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and ye made the saving profession and went down thrice into the water and rose up again, here also figuring by a symbol the three days' burial of Christ."<sup>5</sup> But while the Sacrament was usually administered by immersion in Primitive times, it would be too much to say that this particular mode of administering it was considered essential to its validity. Neither the precise meaning of the word used by our Lord when He instituted the Sacrament, bidding the Apostles make disciples of all nations and baptize

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. iii. 6; S. Mark i. 5; S. Matt. iii. 16; S. Mark i. 10.

<sup>2</sup> "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him" (Acts viii. 38).

<sup>3</sup> *Apology*, I. cap. lxi.

<sup>4</sup> This is also implied in TERTULLIAN, *De Corona*, cap. iii.

<sup>5</sup> *Lectures on the Mysteries*, ii. 4.



them, nor the practice of the Apostles in fulfilment of the charge, as recorded in the New Testament, would warrant such a conclusion. For we meet, in the pages of the New Testament, with many cases of Baptism by the Apostles where it cannot at all be regarded as probable that the recipients of the Sacrament were immersed. Amongst such we might reckon the three thousand baptized on the Day of Pentecost,<sup>1</sup> and the Philippian gaoler and his household baptized at midnight in the prison by S. Paul.<sup>2</sup> It would seem, then, that from the beginning immersion was regarded as the normal mode of administration, but that affusion was allowed as an alternative, and was considered equally valid and as adequate a fulfilment of our Lord's command to "baptize." This, indeed, is exactly the position taken up in the very early document known as the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, which, it is thought, testifies to the current practice of the closing years of the first century A.D. In the section of this book which gives rules for the life of the Christian community we read these directions with regard to Baptism: "Concerning Baptism, thus baptize ye: having first uttered all these things, baptize into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in living water. But if thou hast not living water, baptize in other water; and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But if thou hast neither, pour water upon the head thrice, into the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."<sup>3</sup> It ought not to be necessary to point out that this primitive practice is precisely that which our own Prayer Book intends to perpetuate. Immersion in Baptism is stated as the rule, but affusion is allowed and recognised as equally valid. "If they shall certify him"—so runs the rubric in the Baptismal Office—"that the child may well endure it, the priest shall *dip* it in the Water discreetly and warily, saying . . . But if they certify that the child is weak *it shall suffice to pour* Water upon it, saying the foresaid words."

But besides *matter* there is also necessary to the validity

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 33.

<sup>3</sup> *Didache*, cap. vii.

of a Sacrament what is called, in technical language, *form*. Besides the performance of the material action enjoined by the Lord there must also be the use of the formula which He Himself used in instituting the Sacrament. Therefore the Church has, from the beginning, in literal obedience to Christ's direction baptized "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." For, as S. Augustine very truly asks in a well-known passage, "Take away the Word and what is the water except mere water? The Word is added to the element and it becomes a Sacrament."<sup>1</sup> In the Epistle to the Ephesians S. Paul seems to allude to the two essentials of matter and form in Baptism when he writes of the Church as prepared for presentation to her Lord through cleansing "by the laver of the water with the word,"<sup>2</sup> a passage where S. Chrysostom and Patristic commentators generally understand a reference to the Baptismal formula, the invocation of the Sacred Name of the Trinity which gives to Baptism its efficacy. The subject need not be here further elaborated, but we may note how our Church, in the Prayer Book, lays equal stress on the matter and the form in this Sacrament. This appears very clearly in the questions that are asked when a child is received who has been previously baptized in private. It is not only demanded, "With what matter was this child baptized?" but there follows the question, "With what words was this child baptized?"

In the case of the Holy Eucharist the elements of Bread and Wine constitute the necessary *matter* of the Sacrament.

As regards the first of these it cannot be decided with certainty whether our Lord Himself at the Institution of the Eucharist used leavened or unleavened Bread.<sup>3</sup> The Sacra-

<sup>1</sup> S. AUGUSTINE, *In Joh. Tract*, 80.

<sup>2</sup> ἐν ῥήματι Eph. v. 26. The Greek word here used is not the frequent one (λόγος) which denotes word as existing in thought in the mind, but one which signifies word audibly uttered. It should be noticed also that the fact that the word stands without the article points rather to its use in a technical sense.

<sup>3</sup> Archbishop Temple in a letter bearing date August 26th, 1898, which appeared in the Press, seems to be going too far when he affirms without

ment is therefore valid when celebrated with either. The Church of Rome in prescribing the use of unleavened bread appeals to the original Institution, maintaining that our Lord consecrated Passover cakes which were of necessity unleavened. The Eastern Church on the other hand, likewise professing to follow the Lord's example, has from time immemorial consecrated a leavened loaf at the Eucharist.<sup>1</sup> The Lutherans, following the general custom of the West, use unleavened bread. In attempting to determine the intention of the Reformed English Church in the matter we must take account of the following documentary evidence:—

(a) *The Rubric in the Prayer Book of 1549.*

"For avoiding of all matters and occasions of dissension it is meet that the bread prepared for the Communion be made through all this realm after one sort and fashion: that is to say, *unleavened bread and round, as it was afore*, but without all manner of print, and something more larger and thicker than it was, so that it may be aptly divided in divers pieces."

(b) *The Rubric in the Prayer Book of 1552.*

"And to take away the superstition which any person hath or might have in the bread and wine, *it shall suffice that the bread be such as is usual to be eaten at the table with other meats*, but the best and purest wheat bread that conveniently may be gotten."

(c) In the Prayer Book of 1558 the rubric last quoted was repeated without change, but in *Queen Elizabeth's Injunctions (1559)* the following statement affecting the matter appeared:

"Where also it was in the time of King Edward the Sixth qualification that unleavened bread is "of the same kind as that which our Lord used. . . . Unleavened bread was used by our Lord at the first institution of the Sacrament. He instituted the Sacrament immediately after the Passover, and at the Passover only unleavened bread was used."

<sup>1</sup> That it was not unlawful on the evening of 13th Nisan to use leavened bread, and that therefore our Lord may have consecrated a leavened loaf, is now generally admitted by the best authorities. See, e.g., LUCKOCK, *Divine Liturgy*, pp. 381, 382.

used to have the Sacramental bread of common fine bread, it is ordered for the more reverence to be given to these holy mysteries, being the Sacraments of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, that *the same Sacramental bread be made and formed plain, without any figure thereupon, of the same fineness and fashion round, though somewhat bigger in compass and thickness, as the usual bread and wafer heretofore named singing cakes, which served for the use of the private mass.*"

(d) *The Twentieth Canon (1603)* directs :—

"The Churchwardens of every parish, against the time of every Communion, shall, at the charge of the parish, with the advice and direction of the Minister, provide a sufficient quantity of *fine wheat bread.*"

(e) *The present Rubric (1661)* runs thus :—

"And to take away all occasion of dissention, and superstition, which any person hath or might have concerning the Bread and Wine, *it shall suffice that the Bread be such as is usual to be eaten; but the best and purest Wheat Bread that conveniently may be gotten.*"

Now, this last rubric is sometimes interpreted as forbidding any other kind of bread than that such as is usually eaten.<sup>1</sup> It seems much more natural, however, to understand the words *it shall suffice* as merely permissive and as introducing a statement of what is allowed as an exception rather than what is laid down as an absolute rule.<sup>2</sup> In support of this view of the rubric it can be shown conclusively that at the Elizabethan settlement the authorities of our Church intended that *wafer or unleavened bread should be normally used*, but that ordinary or leavened bread should be permitted in certain

<sup>1</sup> This was the view taken by the Privy Council in the case of *Hibbert v. Purchas*.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly in the Baptismal Office the rubric "*it shall suffice* to pour water" upon the child does not prohibit immersion, but permits an exception to the normal rule, which is intended to be to baptize by immersion.

exceptional cases. Archbishop Parker thus comments on the words in the rubric of 1558: "It shall suffice, I expound, when either there wanteth such fine usual bread, or superstition be feared in the wafer-bread, they may have the Communion in fine usual bread; which is rather a toleration in these two necessities, than is in plain ordering, as is in the Injunction."<sup>1</sup> It is clear from this passage that it was the intention of the Ecclesiastical authorities that the Reformed Church of England should follow the general Western custom, which had also been the English custom up to 1552, in using unleavened bread, but that the use of ordinary or leavened bread was to be permitted in exceptional cases of two kinds: (1) where unleavened bread could not be had, and (2) where superstition attached to the wafer-bread.<sup>2</sup> That it was intended even to press the use of wafer-bread as the rule of the Church comes out clearly in Archbishop Parker's Correspondence. In a letter to Cecil (April 30th, 1565), the Archbishop writes: "Yesterday I called on Mr. Sampson and Dr. Humphrey for conformity, and after some words of advertisement, I did peremptorily will them to agree, or else to depart their places. I shewed them these were the orders which they must observe: to wear the cap . . . to wear a surplice . . . to communicate kneeling *in wafer-bread*."<sup>3</sup> Again, to Bishop Parkhurst of Norwich, who had shown laxity in the administration of his diocese, Parker writes (June 14th, 1574): "As for their contention for wafer-bread and loaf-bread, if the order you have taken will not suffice

<sup>1</sup> *Parker's Correspondence*, ed. Parker Society, p. 376.

<sup>2</sup> The difficulty of maintaining the use of wafer-bread in face of superstition is well illustrated by a passage in a letter of Parker to Cecil (April 12th, 1566): "One of my chaplains serving the last Sunday [the Sunday next before Easter] at a parish, and being informed that divers communicants would have received, the table made all ready accordingly, while he was reading the Passion [the Holy Gospel for the day] one man of the parish drew from the table both the cup *and the wafer-bread*, because the bread was not common, and so the minister derided and the people disappointed."—*Parker's Correspondence*, p. 277.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

them, they may fortune hereafter to wish they had been more conformable: although I trust that *you mean not universally in your diocese to command or wink at the loaf-bread, but, for peace and quietness, here and there to be contented therewith.*"<sup>1</sup> We may add that it is certainly known that wafer-bread was in use in some places down to 1643. Bishop Cosin testifies to this when writing of the rubric: "It is not here commanded that no unleavened or wafer-bread should be used, but it is said only that the other bread shall suffice. So that there was no necessity, yet there was a liberty still reserved of using wafer-bread, which was continued in divers churches of the kingdom, and Westminster for one."<sup>2</sup> To sum up: wafer or unleavened bread has been used in Western Christendom certainly since 1051 A.D., and our Reformers evidently intended that the English Church should still continue to follow the Western custom, the use of leavened bread being permitted as an alternative in exceptional cases.

The second essential to the *matter* of the Eucharist, that it may be duly (*rite*) celebrated, is the element of Wine. In early times certain sectaries<sup>3</sup> holding a dualistic theory, and consequently condemning marriage and the use of wine and of flesh meat as unlawful, consecrated water instead of wine at the Eucharist. S. Cyprian found it necessary to write against their error in this respect. In a letter to Cæcilius<sup>4</sup> he says: "I wonder very much whence has originated this practice, that, contrary to evangelical and apostolical discipline, water is offered in some places in the Lord's Cup, which water by itself cannot express the Blood of Christ. . . . We find that that was wine which He called His Blood,"<sup>5</sup> whence it appears that the Blood of Christ is not offered if

<sup>1</sup> *Parker's Correspondence*, p. 460.

<sup>2</sup> *Cosin's Works*, Oxford ed., p. 481.

<sup>3</sup> Apparently they were disciples of Tatian, the compiler of the Diatessaron. By Eusebius they are called *Encratites* on account of their asceticism, and because of their use of water in the Eucharist we find them also called *Hydroparastatæ* by Theodoret, and *Aquarii* by S. Augustine.

<sup>4</sup> *Epistle lxi.*, ed. Goldhorn.

<sup>5</sup> *Viz.* in S. Matt. xxvi. 28, 29.



there be no wine in the Cup, nor the Lord's Sacrifice celebrated with a legitimate consecration unless our Oblation and Sacrifice correspond to His Passion. But how shall we drink the new wine of the fruit of the vine with Christ in the Kingdom of His Father, if in the Sacrifice of God the Father and of Christ we do not offer wine, nor mix the Cup of the Lord by the Lord's own tradition. . . . But if we may not break even the least of the Lord's commandments, how much rather is it forbidden to infringe such important ones, so great, so pertaining to the very Sacrament of our Lord's Passion and our own redemption, or to change it by human tradition into anything else than what was Divinely appointed." This same reasoning which S. Cyprian uses against the Aquarians would seem to apply equally to some in modern times, who, from their strong sense of the abuse to which alcoholic drink is liable, would altogether reject its use, and even in the Sacrament substitute some other liquor for true wine.

We have seen that it is uncertain whether our Lord used unleavened or leavened bread at the Institution of the Eucharist, and the uncertainty is emphasised by the divergent custom of Eastern and Western Christendom. There is not the same degree of uncertainty as regards the contents of the Cup consecrated by our Lord at the last Supper. Both in East and West it has been the custom, from the earliest times, to consecrate *wine mingled with water*, and the best authorities agree that this is a literal following of the Lord's own action. Dr. Edersheim tells us that the Rabbinic testimony to the use of a mixed Cup at the Paschal Supper is express: "Red wine alone was to be used at the Paschal Supper *and always mixed with water*. Of this there cannot be the slightest doubt."<sup>1</sup> As evidence of the practice of the Primitive Church we may refer to Justin Martyr's account of the celebration of the Eucharist: "When he who officiates has performed the consecration and all the people have responded, they who amongst us are called deacons distribute to each one of those

<sup>1</sup> *The Temple and its Services*, p. 204 and footnote.

present to partake of the consecrated bread, and of *the wine mixed with water*.”<sup>1</sup> Not only this earliest record of the ritual of the celebration of the Eucharist, but the primitive Liturgies and the Patristic writings both in East and West testify to the custom of consecrating a mixed Chalice. Thus *e.g.* S. Cyprian, in the letter to Cæcilius above quoted, explains and justifies the use of a mixed Cup in the Sacrament, and expressly grounds it upon Christ’s example at the Institution, even going so far as to affirm “the Cup of the Lord is not indeed water alone, nor wine alone, unless each be mingled with the other.”

To come more particularly to the practice of our own Church since the Reformation—in the *Prayer Book of 1549* a rubric directed that water should be mingled with the wine in the Chalice after the Offertory:—

“Putting the wine into the chalice . . . putting thereto a little pure and clean water, and setting both the bread and wine upon the altar.”

In the *Prayer Book of 1552* this rubric was altogether omitted. It is doubtful, however, whether any significance attaches to this. We can scarcely argue that it was intended that the mixture should be discontinued because, in the same Book of 1552, no manual acts of any kind are prescribed.<sup>2</sup> That omission was not considered as prohibition is clear from the action of several illustrious divines since the Reformation; *e.g.* it was the custom of Bishop Andrewes to use the mixed Chalice. Cosin also testifies to its use in his time, writing in his notes on the Catechism, “Our Church forbids it not for aught I know, and they that think fit may use it, as some most eminent among us do at this day.” Bishop Wilson, of Sodor and Man, also writes in his *Sacra Privata* of “placing bread and *wine and water* upon the Altar.”

The mixing of water with the Sacramental wine and the administration of a mixed Chalice were charged as offences

<sup>1</sup> JUSTIN MARTYR, *Apology*, i. cap. lxxv.

<sup>2</sup> So Sir Robert Phillimore argued when giving judgment in the case of *Martin v. Mackonochie*.

against the defendant in the case of *Martin v. Mackonochie*. Sir Robert Phillimore gave judgment as follows: "From a very early period, before the division of the Church, it was customary to mix a little water with the Sacramental wine. There is nothing superstitious about such mixing. It prevailed in the Church of England before the Reformation. The rubric of 1549 shows that the mixture of wine and water was properly described as wine. In all later Prayer Books, however, the mention of water is omitted, and though this omission may not be significant in the Book of 1552, in which no manual acts are prescribed, that cannot be said of the present Prayer Book, and I must regard this omission in it as equivalent to a prohibition of the ceremony or manual act of mixing water with the wine during the celebration. I do not say that it is illegal to administer wine with which a little water has been previously mixed." It will be seen that two distinct points are here pronounced upon:—

(1) The ceremonial mixing of the Cup during the service (declared illegal).

(2) The administration of a mixed Cup (declared not illegal).

Subsequently, in the case of *Elphinstone v. Purchas*, when the administration of a mixed Cup was again charged as an offence, the same learned judge quoted the examples of Bishop Andrewes and Bishop Cosin in favour of the practice in question, and declared that he could see nothing illegal in it.

In the case of *Read v. the Bishop of Lincoln* the late Archbishop Benson had the same two points before him for decision which are specified above.

(1) As to the mixing of the Cup the Archbishop held that the express removal since 1552 of the plain direction to mix which had appeared in 1549 must be understood to mean that the mixing as a ceremonial act in the Service is to be discontinued. He also went further and defended the discontinuance of ceremonial mixing on Liturgical grounds, referring to the practice of the East as exhibited in the

Liturgy of S. Chrysostom, and to the Mozarabic Liturgy amongst Western Christians.

(2) With regard to the administration of a mixed Cup, it was declared by the same Archbishop's Judgment that no ground could be found for pronouncing the use of a Cup mixed beforehand an offence.<sup>1</sup>

To sum up—

(1) The consecration and administration of a mixed Cup is, and always has been, the rule of the Church as a whole in East and West, and is expressly traced to our Lord's own action at the Institution. The mixed Chalice was certainly used in the English Church down to 1552, and at intervals since, the omission of the direction to mix not being understood as a prohibition by some of the most learned post-Reformation clergy. Finally, the administration of a mixed Cup has been declared not illegal by Archbishop Benson.

(2) We raise a difficult question if we ask, "When is the mixture to be made?" Archbishop Benson thought that when the English Reformers omitted the direction to mix they intended that such mixture as a manual act in the Service should cease, and that they were consciously imitating the example of the Eastern Church. This is at any rate a tenable opinion. Archbishops Temple and Maclagan in their Decision on the Ceremonial use of Incense (1899) affirm that the Reformers removed the direction to mix the Cup because of their "desire for conformity with the New Testament account of the original institution of the great Sacrament"<sup>2</sup>—a theory unsupported by evidence, and which

<sup>1</sup> When the case was heard on appeal the Privy Council upheld Archbishop Benson's decision, maintaining that the mixed Chalice, not being illegal on other grounds, cannot be made illegal by any symbolism which has been attached to it.

<sup>2</sup> *Decision of the Archbishops on the Ceremonial use of Incense*. Our Archbishops continue: "The ritual was as nearly as it could be made a repetition of the original Feast. Even the mixing of water with the wine was dropped for the same reason. For though our Lord used the

it is impossible to maintain in face of the fact that the rubrics attached to the Prayer of Consecration directing that the Priest should take the Bread and the Cup respectively into his hands were omitted at the same time (1552) as the direction to mix the Chalice. It is perfectly clear that a desire to bring the Service into correspondence with the original Institution cannot have been the general motive for these omissions; on what ground, therefore, are we to imagine that it was the cause of any of them?<sup>1</sup> We are at liberty to hold the simpler explanation that this matter of the mixture of the Cup, like so many other details, both ceremonial and disciplinary, was only dealt with by the Reformers in an imperfect and unsatisfactory manner, that the Prayer Book rubrics cannot be taken as a complete and systematic guide, and that (as Bishop Cosin argued) omission is not prohibition. Those liturgiologists seem accordingly to be in the stronger position who urge that the English Church should follow the general usage of the West, and that a little water should be mixed with the Sacramental wine when the Oblations are prepared and set upon the Altar.

As regards the *form* of the Sacrament, it is necessary to its validity that the words of consecration should be recited

wine of the Passover, which was a mixed cup, there is no record of His having mixed it afresh for the purpose of His Sacrament, nor is there any reason to believe that He did so. The mixing of the Chalice as a part of the ceremonial was therefore omitted."

<sup>1</sup> Such evidence as we have tends to show that in the regulations concerning the Sacrament (over and above the essentials) our Reformers followed not the Biblical narrative, but rather continuous Church tradition from Primitive times. Bucer, the famous Protestant theologian, whose influence is generally thought to have partly occasioned, and to some extent coloured, the Prayer Book revision of 1552, expressly discountenances the idea that the Church in arranging details should copy the example of the original Institution. Thus he writes to Bishop Hooper (in 1550): "It is evident that our Lord Jesus Christ left His Church at liberty to order everything else (*i.e.* over and above the essentials) which appertains to the decent and useful administration of His mysteries. Hence we celebrate the Sacred Supper neither in the evening nor in private houses."

by a duly ordained Priest. For the due consecration and administration of the Holy Communion it has ever been held that the action of a duly ordained Minister is requisite. As men cannot preach except they be sent, so the Sacraments cannot be duly ministered except there be some with authority to minister them.



## CHAPTER X

### SACRAMENTS ADMINISTERED BY THE CHURCH

#### A. BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

IN the last chapter it has been shown that when Sacramental ordinances rest upon a Divine Revelation and have God's express promise of grace attached man is, in practice, bound to the use of them, if he would appropriate the spiritual grace, and they must be regarded as of perpetual obligation in God's Church. The positive command to use the outward ceremony becomes in such case a moral precept.<sup>1</sup> Sacraments thus Divinely ordained are necessary to salvation. Of the many means of grace which it is man's privilege to enjoy in the Church there are two which, both as regards their outward sign and their inward grace, beyond all doubt rest upon Christ's institution and promise, and accordingly have ever been regarded and used by Christians as necessary to salvation—Baptism and the Holy Eucharist.<sup>2</sup> These two ordinances stand on a higher level than other means of grace as the Sacraments of the Gospel,<sup>3</sup> because we have the assurance in the written records of the Evangelists that the Lord Himself both instituted the outward sign and expressly attached to it in either case the promise of the spiritual grace signified. For the perfection of a Sacrament three things ought to concur. The first is a plain and notable sign which may be manifestly

<sup>1</sup> See the argument of chapter i. in part ii. of BUTLER'S *Analogy*.

<sup>2</sup> *Church Catechism*.

<sup>3</sup> Art. xxv.

perceived. The second is a promise of God which is represented unto us and clearly confirmed by the outward sign. The third is a command of God by which necessity is laid upon us of observing the ordinance. Since these three things occur only in the case of Baptism and the Eucharist, according to the authority of Scripture, the Church accounts these two only as proper Sacraments of the New Covenant.<sup>1</sup> Viewing the matter in the light of reason also we see that these two are on a different footing from the other ordinances of the Church, because they stand to the spiritual life in the relation of birth and sustenance. Other Sacramental ordinances may be very helpful and conducive to due development and healthy exercise of spiritual activity, or they may be, as Absolution is, remedial and restorative, analogous to medicine; but Baptism and the Eucharist are essential to spiritual life, as birth and sustenance are essential conditions of life in the body. That the two great Sacraments occupy this unique position amongst religious ordinances was distinctly intimated by Christ Himself, for with respect to the one He affirmed, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God,"<sup>2</sup> while of the other He said, "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you."<sup>3</sup>

The Church's belief and teaching as to the importance and necessity of Baptism, and her practice in administering it as necessary to salvation, are grounded upon the testimony and warrant of the New Testament Scriptures. We find that, in the Gospel narrative, a command to baptize forms part of our Lord's charge to the Apostles, when, before His Ascension, He commissioned them for their missionary work. The work thus committed to them was, in the first place, an extension of His own teaching work. "Go ye and make disciples of all the nations."<sup>4</sup> As He had made the twelve His own disciples, so they, in their turn, were to make

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Reformatio Legum*, "De Sacramentis," cap. 2; and see further chapter ix., p. 149 above.

<sup>2</sup> S. John iii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> S. John vi. 53.

<sup>4</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

disciples. But in the words that follow in immediate connexion it is very distinctly intimated that, in Christ's intention, the Apostles whom He sent forth were to be not merely the founders of a new school, but were to stand to men in another and higher relation than that of teachers to disciples. By adding the injunction to baptize the disciples thus taught,<sup>1</sup> our Lord showed that, in His plan for the spreading and the permanence of His revelation, and of that highest service of God which He came to make possible for man, it was intended that discipleship should normally issue in Baptism. The teaching work of the Apostles was to be the necessary groundwork for the exercise of their ministerial office, and the gathering of disciples was to be in view of the admission of men into Divine fellowship by Baptism.<sup>2</sup> We find, too, on examination, that this part of the Apostolic commission—the charge to baptize—was, like the commission to teach, an extension of our Lord's own work and ministry. Jesus, we read, “made *and baptized* more disciples than John”;<sup>3</sup> a statement from which we naturally draw the conclusion that, when our Lord began to draw a company of disciples round Him by His teaching, He followed the precedent set by S. John the Baptist, and admitted men into that company by baptizing them. The rite, we are told, was not administered in general by Christ Himself, but by others under His direction; “Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples.”<sup>4</sup> Whether these baptizing disciples had first been baptized by Christ Himself or no, is a point which cannot be certainly determined, but, whatever may be the precise interpretation of the passage in S. John's Gospel, the words evidently testify that during our Lord's public ministry acceptance of Baptism was the natural and normal mode of acknowledging Him as Teacher and taking up His service. The importance and necessity of Baptism as the outcome of discipleship is thus

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19—“baptizing them *into the Name of the Father*,” etc. See also 1 S. John i. 3.

<sup>3</sup> S. John iv. 1.

<sup>4</sup> S. John iv. 2.

shown in the words of Christ's charge as recorded by S. Matthew, a charge which enjoined the continued administration of a rite which the Apostles had already been accustomed to administer under their Master's direction. But before we leave this part of our subject it will be well to notice that the necessity of Baptism is likewise implied in the parallel passage of the Gospel according to S. Mark. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."<sup>1</sup> Here, just as in the saying recorded by S. Matthew, acceptance of Christ by faith and Baptism are represented as going naturally together. Intellectual assent to the Gospel preaching, coupled with moral self-surrender to Christ, followed as a matter of course by Baptism—this is laid down by our Lord as the essential condition of salvation.

The best commentary on our Lord's charge is furnished by the practice of the Apostles themselves when, after having received the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide them into all the truth, they went forth to carry out their commission. We find that when those who had been convinced by their preaching asked for guidance, the first direction of the Apostles regularly was that converts should be admitted by Baptism into fellowship with themselves, that thus, being purified from sin,<sup>2</sup> they might enter that new and higher state which the Lord had opened for all believers. When those who were convinced by S. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost asked, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter's immediate answer was, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you."<sup>3</sup> Similarly we are told that when the people of Samaria believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus

<sup>1</sup> S. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Recognition of the fact that the last twelve verses of S. Mark do not form the original conclusion of the Gospel does not necessitate the rejection of the passage in question as a true report of Christ's words. The section probably dates from the first century. See SWETE, *S. Mark*, Introduction, p. cv. Dr. SALMON argues for S. Mark's authorship of the verses (*Introduction to New Testament*, pp. 159 *et seqq.*, 2nd edition).

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 38; xxii. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Acts ii. 38.

Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.<sup>1</sup> Again, after Ananias of Damascus had been commissioned by the Lord in a vision to seek out the newly converted Saul, and give him guidance, his first step, when he had explained to Saul the purpose and significance of the heavenly vision he had received, was to prepare him for Baptism and baptize him.<sup>2</sup> So, too, in the case of the Gentile centurion Cornelius, S. Peter commanded Baptism when assured of the acceptance of the uncircumcised with God.<sup>3</sup> S. Paul, also, in his missionary journeys followed the same practice, as may be noted, for example, in the case of Lydia of Thyatira,<sup>4</sup> and of the gaoler and his family at Philippi.<sup>5</sup> The whole testimony of the Acts and Epistles unmistakably proves that the Apostles acted on the principle that Baptism is necessary as a condition of entrance into the Kingdom of God.

It is clear that the Apostles would not have acted as they are recorded to have done unless they had viewed Baptism as essential. Christ Himself connected faith and Baptism together as conditions of salvation, and agreeably to this we find that both take their place as conditions of salvation in Apostolic teaching. The connexion between faith and salvation, so frequently illustrated in the Gospels by the miracles of healing, appears in the Epistles as an axiom of Christian soteriology. Similarly, Baptism is quite as distinctly, though less frequently, associated with salvation.<sup>6</sup> S. Peter writes of Baptism that it "doth now save us,"<sup>7</sup> and S. Paul speaks of God our Saviour as having "saved us through the laver of regeneration."<sup>8</sup> The same doctrine of Baptism as a condition of salvation is implied also in S. Luke's account of the proceedings of the Day of Pentecost and the immediately subsequent period: he tells us that they who received S. Peter's word were baptized, "and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls . . . and the Lord added

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii. 12; cf. also v. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Acts x. 45-8.

<sup>5</sup> Acts xvi. 33.

<sup>7</sup> 1 S. Peter iii. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Acts ix. 18; xxii. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xvi. 15.

<sup>6</sup> See SWETE'S *S. Mark*, p. 381.

<sup>8</sup> Titus iii. 5.

to them day by day those that were being saved.”<sup>1</sup> But apart from these passages which explicitly or implicitly connect Baptism with salvation, the Apostolic doctrine as to the necessity and importance of the Sacrament is well illustrated by the Old Testament analogies adduced in the Epistles in the New Testament :—

(1) S. Peter tells us that Baptism is the antitype of the Flood. “In the Ark,” he writes, “few souls were saved through water : which also in the antitype doth now save you, even Baptism.”<sup>2</sup> When God saved Noah and his family in the Ark from perishing by water, He figured thereby His Holy Baptism.<sup>3</sup> The passage in S. Peter is a somewhat difficult one, but the Apostle seems to have chiefly in mind the purifying and saving efficacy of Baptism as a Divine ordinance, and he emphasises this in a most impressive way by setting it out as the spiritual analogue of the great purifying Divine visitation of the Deluge, when, by special dispensation of God’s grace and mercy, Noah and those with him in the Ark were saved. The Apostle may well have thought of the Deluge as burying the old evils of the world and giving the human race, as it were, a fresh start under new and better conditions ; the world was, in a sense, regenerated and brought into a new covenant with God.<sup>4</sup>

(2) S. Paul teaches us to regard the passage of Israel through the Red Sea as typical of Baptism. “I would not have you ignorant,” he writes to the Corinthians, “how that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea ; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.”<sup>5</sup> This type, like the former one, is specially alluded to in our Baptismal Office ; God by safely leading His people Israel through the Red Sea figured His Holy Baptism. S. Paul is illustrating Christian life at Corinth, and points

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 41, 47.

<sup>2</sup> 1 S. Peter iii. 20, 21.

<sup>3</sup> See Prayer in the Baptismal Office.

<sup>4</sup> See Gen. viii. 20-2 ; ix. 8-17.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.



out that the Jews in the Old Testament had privileges and temptations analogous to those of the Corinthian Christians. Their passage through the sea under the cloud was a Baptism. A Baptism "unto Moses," S. Paul calls it; because by committing themselves to the sea under Moses' guidance the children of Israel, so to speak, pledged allegiance to Moses as their Divinely commissioned deliverer. The view of Baptism which is uppermost in S. Paul's mind in this passage is its aspect as an oath of allegiance to a New Master, a self-committal to Christ as the Divine Saviour, and a solemn pledge to follow Him as the leader of men from the House of bondage to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. The Apostle's reference thus suggests a very significant parallel between the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and salvation from sin by Christian Baptism, and light is thrown incidentally on his doctrine with regard to Baptism. The passage of the Red Sea prefigured Christian Baptism, in that it was for Israel, as Baptism is for the Christian, a renunciation of past evil, a salvation from the old life of slavery, the breaking of the power of the enemy, and freedom to go forward, as God's covenanted people, in the way marked out by Him.<sup>1</sup>

(3) There is yet a third Old Testament analogy of Christian Baptism which receives special mention in the New Testament. S. Paul writes to the Christians at Colossæ: "In Christ ye were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in Baptism, wherein ye were also raised with Him."<sup>2</sup> The spiritual circumcision of the Christian takes place when he is baptized. Baptism is Christian circumcision.<sup>3</sup> The precise point of the Apostle's comparison lies, as the context shows, in the fact that the spiritual import of the rite of circumcision, viz. the putting off of the body of the flesh, corresponds to the spiritual grace of Christian Baptism, which is remission

<sup>1</sup> S. CYRIL of Jerusalem works out the analogy in detail, *Catechetical Lectures on the Mysteries*, i. 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Col. ii. 11, 12.

<sup>3</sup> περιτομή τοῦ Χριστοῦ, Col. ii. 11.

of sins ; but the obvious ground and justification of S. Paul's language is that, in his view, Baptism is the initiatory rite into Church membership and to the privileges of the Covenant of the Dispensation of Christ, just as Circumcision was the necessary entrance into the Jewish Church and to the privileges of the Covenant of the old Dispensation.

Such being the Apostolic doctrine and practice as recorded in the New Testament, the Church has only been faithful to her trust in administering Baptism as a matter of course to all those who accept her preaching, and in regarding it as the necessary entrance into her fellowship, admitting men to a state of salvation, making men heirs of the Heavenly Kingdom and God's covenanted people of the Dispensation of the Incarnation. The necessity and importance thus ascribed to the Sacrament is illustrated in many ways by Ecclesiastical usage from the earliest times.

First of all we may refer to the custom of Infant Baptism. The preaching of the Gospel was at the outset addressed to adults, and in the first days adults were consequently the recipients of Baptism. There is, however, a natural presumption that when the fathers of families or masters of households were converted they would desire that the children of the household should share in the spiritual blessings offered in the Church, and that, accordingly, from Apostolic times infants were considered as fit subjects for Baptism.<sup>1</sup> Until the Church had spread widely and there were many Christian parents to whom, as Christians, children were born, the Baptism of infants may indeed have been exceptional, but it is clear that it very soon became the general rule of the Church as a whole. The analogy of Circumcision, which, as we have seen, dates from Apostolic times and has S. Paul's authority, contributed no doubt to the general adoption of the practice of Infant Baptism. Converts, and particularly converts from Judaism, naturally argued that as the Old Covenant had embraced unconscious infants, who were

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *e.g.* Acts xvi. 33.

circumcised on the eighth day according to the Divine commandment, so also the New Covenant, especially as being the more comprehensive in character, should take them in. Nor were Christians left without the Master's guidance, for, though He gave no precise command in so many words to baptize infants, yet He did set out a principle which applies directly to the matter, and in fact supplied by anticipation an answer to the question, which was bound to arise, whether the New Covenant could embrace infants as the Old had done. The Lord received and blessed little children;<sup>1</sup> He declared their fitness for His Kingdom, and emphatically commended the condition of children and a childlike spirit as the ideal condition for entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.<sup>2</sup> It is to these actions and accompanying utterances of the Lord that the Church appeals as justifying her administration of Baptism to infants as the normal form of the Christian Sacrament.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the reasons already stated, there was also a third one, and that a theological one, which contributed to the adoption of the practice of Infant Baptism as the rule of the Church; this was the doctrine of Original Sin, which is so prominent both in the Old Testament and in the New. The conviction that all men are conceived and born in sin,<sup>4</sup> that we are by nature children of wrath,<sup>5</sup> renders the New Birth of Baptism<sup>6</sup> necessary for infants, as well as for those of maturer years who have committed actual sin. Thus the practice of baptizing infants as a course most agreeable to the institution of Christ, and the grounds on which the practice was adopted as the rule of the Church, alike testify to the Church's conviction of the necessity of the Sacrament as the entrance to the New Covenant.

As the rule with regard to the recipients of Baptism evidences the conviction of the necessity of the Sacrament

<sup>1</sup> Including unconscious infants (*βρέφη*), S. Luke xviii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 3; S. Mark x. 14, 15.

<sup>3</sup> S. Mark x. 13-16 is read for the Gospel in the Baptismal Office.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. li. 5.      <sup>5</sup> Eph. ii. 3.      <sup>6</sup> S. John iii. 3, 5; Titus iii. 5.

for salvation, so also the custom of the Church with regard to the Minister of the Sacrament points in the same direction. The commission to baptize was given by our Lord to the Apostles, and accordingly the theory is that the Minister of Baptism is, in the first instance, the Bishop. From some incidental allusions in the New Testament, however, we gather that it was not the usual practice of the Apostles to administer the Sacrament themselves in person, but that it was more usually administered by others acting under their direction. For example, in the case of Cornelius and his household it is stated, not that S. Peter baptized them, but that he commanded them to be baptized.<sup>1</sup> S. Paul, again, considers the fact that he did not as a rule baptize his converts as a fortunate circumstance in view of the possible accusation that he had attempted to form at Corinth a party attached to himself personally, and refers to the cases of Crispus, Gaius, and the household of Stephanas as exceptions in which he had administered the Sacrament with his own hands, contrary to his usual practice.<sup>2</sup> After the recorded example of the Apostles it became the general custom for the Bishop, as chief Minister of the Church and successor of the Apostles, not to baptize in person, but the Sacrament was usually administered by the inferior Ministers under his direction and sanction,<sup>3</sup> or it might even be administered by a layman. S. Jerome, for example, writes that "without the chrism and the Bishop's command neither Presbyter nor Deacon have the right of baptizing; but this we know to be frequently allowed even to laymen, if, however, necessity compels."<sup>4</sup> S. Augustine argues that the Minister is not of the essence of the Sacrament, but that in all cases, by whomsoever the rite may be administered, Christ Himself is the Baptizer,

<sup>1</sup> Acts x. 48.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. i. 14-17.

<sup>3</sup> "Let no man do aught of things pertaining to the Church apart from the Bishop. . . . It is not lawful apart from the Bishop to baptize." —IGNATIUS, *Ep. to the Smyræans*, cap. viii.

<sup>4</sup> *Adv. Luciferianos*, cap. iv. See also a passage to the same effect in TERTULLIAN's treatise, *De Baptismo*, cap. xvii.

for it is written He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup> The general consent of the Church has sanctioned the principle that the Minister is not of the essence of the Sacrament, and accordingly it is held that the Sacrament is validly administered when the baptizer is a layman, whether man or woman.<sup>2</sup> It might not unfrequently happen that an unbaptized person, adult or infant, lay *in extremis*, and the fact that it is perfectly lawful and right for anyone to administer the Sacrament in such a case proves the necessity of the ordinance in the mind of the Church.

Not only is Baptism valid when administered by a layman, but it must be reckoned further proof of the importance attached to the Sacrament that the Church recognises it as valid even when administered by heretics, provided, of course, that the matter and form of the Sacrament be duly observed. The question as to the validity of heretics' Baptism was forced on the Church as one of practical importance by the circumstances of the middle of the third century. Against the validity of heretical Baptism were S. Cyprian of Carthage, the African Bishops generally, and some Bishops of Asia Minor, chief amongst whom was Firmilian of Cæsarea in Cappadocia. The custom of the Church of Rome, vehemently defended by Bishop Stephen, was to receive without a second Baptism heretics who returned to the fold of the Church if they had been baptized in the Name of the Trinity, and to admit them to communion after imposition of hands. The Roman practice won more and more general acceptance and was confirmed by the Œcumenical Councils of Nicæa (A.D. 325) and of Constantinople (A.D. 381).<sup>3</sup> S. Augustine, who had to deal with the debated matter of the re-baptism of heretics in his controversy with the Donatists, may be

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. iii. 11. See S. Augustine *In Jo. Tract*, vi. 14.

<sup>2</sup> "Yea, 'Baptism by any man in case of necessity' was the voice of the whole world heretofore. Neither is Tertullian, Epiphanius, Augustine, or any other of the ancients against it."—HOOKER, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, V. lxi. 3.

<sup>3</sup> The Baptism of Samosatians was excluded from recognition at Nicæa, and that administered by Montanists, Eunomians, and Sabellians at

said to have disposed of the question. The principle maintained by him, that in Baptism the Minister is not of the essence of the Sacrament, has received general acceptance, and the final settlement was thus based on the principle that unworthiness in the Minister cannot mar the work of God, or make His promise to be of no effect when the conditions He has laid down are complied with, so that if the essentials are duly observed Baptism administered by heretics is valid, though irregular.

In early times there seems to have been current in some parts a superstitious custom of giving Baptism after death to the bodies of those who from one cause or another had failed to receive the Sacrament during life. A kindred practice also prevailed to some considerable extent of administering a vicarious Baptism on behalf of such as had died unbaptized. The existence amongst the Jews of a rite of vicarious purification on behalf of those who had died while in a state of ceremonial uncleanness seems to indicate that this custom of vicarious Baptism amongst Christians owed its origin in the first instance to Jewish sentiment. We know that Baptism of a living person as proxy for one deceased was practised by some of the heretics in early ages, and it is not at all improbable that S. Paul may be alluding to such custom when he asks, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?"<sup>1</sup>

Constantinople. The reason for these exclusions was that, the heretics in question being unsound on the doctrine of the Trinity, there was no guarantee that in Baptism administered by them the due "form" of the Sacrament would be preserved.

<sup>1</sup> S. Paul's words—*οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν*, 1 Cor. xv. 29—are certainly most naturally interpreted as referring to a custom of vicarious Baptism on behalf of the dead. The Apostle does not commend the custom, but simply refers to the existence of it for the purpose of argument. S. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and others, however, give a different interpretation, as though S. Paul would ask, "If there be no resurrection, what shall they do who are baptized in hope of the dead rising again?" Christian Baptism, as such, being received in hope of resurrection from the dead, and being symbolical of it.



The fact that such a custom existed at all, points, as S. Paul here indicates, to the widespread conviction of a future resurrection and life for the dead, and at the same time also testifies to a general belief in the necessity of Baptism in order that man may have and enjoy his full and true life hereafter.

Further testimony to the necessity of Baptism as the Sacrament of entrance into the Church of Christ may be found in the general custom of bestowing more reverent care on the burial of those whose bodies have through Baptism been consecrated to be temples of the Holy Spirit. By refusing rites of Christian Burial to other than baptized persons the Church evidences the principle that the Sacrament is the necessary entrance into the Church, and that by it Christians are distinguished from non-Christians.<sup>1</sup> In the Anglican Church the unbaptized are, equally with the excommunicate, expressly excluded from the right to the use of the Burial Office of the Church. The opening rubric of that Office runs: "Here is to be noted, that the Office ensuing is not to be used for any that die unbaptized, or excommunicate, or have laid violent hands upon themselves." The Rubric was inserted in our Prayer Book in 1661, but the three classes of persons named in it are the same as were excluded from Christian Burial by the ancient Canons of the Church. The existence of such a rule plainly indicates, and its observance emphasises, the necessity of the Sacrament.

As a final proof of the general necessity of Baptism we may refer to the extraordinary character of the exceptions allowed, these being of such nature as to prove and emphasise the rule. Two kinds of exception only have been allowed by common consent. (1) The case of one who is desirous of Baptism and also exhibits the essential requirements of faith and repentance, but who, through unavoidable circumstance or accident, dies before the Sacrament can be administered. (2) The case of such as, not having been

<sup>1</sup> See above, chapter ix., p. 155.

baptized, nevertheless lay down their lives for the cause of Christ, and are, as martyrs, baptized, so to speak, in their own blood. S. Augustine argues<sup>1</sup> that martyrdom dispenses from the necessity of the reception of the Sacrament, setting our Lord's words, "Whoso shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in Heaven,"<sup>2</sup> and His other saying, "Whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it,"<sup>3</sup> against the apparent absolute exclusiveness of the well-known words to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."<sup>4</sup> S. Ambrose, in his sermon at the funeral of the Emperor Valentinian II. (A.D. 392), testifies to the allowance of both the exceptions named above. The Emperor had written to Ambrose expressing a desire to receive Baptism at his hands; before the Sacrament could be administered, however, Valentinian was assassinated at Vienne. S. Ambrose, in his sermon, urges that since the Emperor had expressly desired the grace of the Sacrament, and was preparing to be baptized, it ought not to be doubted that he had received the grace he prayed for, and that a good intention gained for him what the martyrs gained by shedding their blood.

The outward sign in the Sacrament of Baptism is the act of washing with water. The form of the act has already been treated,<sup>5</sup> and it will only be necessary here to refer to its obvious symbolism. The act of washing the body with water aptly figures the inward grace of purification of the soul. The ceremonial act which our Lord made the outward sign of His Sacrament was not a new or unfamiliar one, but one whose character and meaning must have been well understood by His disciples, by the Jews in general, and by proselytes to Judaism. We find in the Old Testament

<sup>1</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, XIII. vii.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. x. 32.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 25.

<sup>4</sup> S. John iii. 5.

<sup>5</sup> See above, chapter ix., pp. 166-8.

a ceremonial washing applied both to persons and things for consecration and purification,<sup>1</sup> and, later, Baptism was looked upon, so Rabbinic testimony shows, as absolutely necessary to make a proselyte.<sup>2</sup> The waters of Baptism were to a stranger who sought admission to the Old Covenant waters of purification. As he stepped out of the waters he was considered as "born anew"—in the language of the Rabbis—as if he were "a little child just born," as "a child of one day."<sup>3</sup> The Baptism of a proselyte was regarded as a new birth in that it implied a new relationship to God and to His people Israel. When John the son of Zacharias came to prepare the way for the Messiah by the preaching of repentance, he too administered a rite of Baptism as an expressive outward symbol of the moral and spiritual purification necessary in order that men might take their place in the expected Kingdom of God. "There went out to him Jerusalem and all Judæa and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."<sup>4</sup> It is clear, therefore, that to Christ's disciples as Jews and as disciples of John the Baptist, which we know some of them had previously been, the outward sign of Baptism enjoined by their Master would be primarily associated with the idea of purification or remission of sins.

We may consider Christ's own Baptism as typical and as shadowing forth the inward graces of the Christian Sacrament:—

(1) The Baptism administered by S. John signified remission of sins, and impressively set forth the need of purification. The Baptist himself realised that it was not necessary for Christ to submit to a rite which implied need

<sup>1</sup> See *e.g.* Exod. xxix. 4; Num. viii. 7; xix. 8, 9; Deut. xxi. 6; Ps. li. 2; Isa. i. 16; Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

<sup>2</sup> See EDERSHEIM, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. ii. appendix xii. p. 742.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 743.

<sup>4</sup> S. Matt. iii. 5, 6.

of purification from sin. "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?"<sup>1</sup> was his exclamation when he saw Christ coming to him for Baptism. The Sinless One, in truth, needed no purification, and His submission to John's Baptism was part of that wonderful condescension and self-abasement for our sakes, whereby the Son of God suffered Himself to be numbered with the transgressors. No cleansing could add anything to the purity of the All-Holy One, but, on the other hand, His undergoing the Baptismal ceremony imparted a new sanctity and power to the waters of Baptism. When Christ bathed in the river Jordan He imparted to the waters His own Divine influence,<sup>2</sup> and God 'by the Baptism of His well-beloved Son in Jordan did sanctify water to the mystical washing away of sin.'<sup>3</sup> Cleansing from sin is the primary idea underlying the ceremony of Baptism, and our Lord submitted to be baptized that through His condescension to our infirmity His own purity might, by means of the Baptismal waters, pass on to us.

(2) It was as our Lord came up from the waters of Baptism that the Holy Ghost descended in bodily shape<sup>4</sup> upon Him, as S. John saw and testified.<sup>5</sup> At His Baptism He was designated as the Messiah of ancient prophecies and anointed by the Holy Spirit for the work of His life which lay before Him, and which the Father had given Him to do.

(3) Not only was there a visible descent of the Holy Spirit upon Christ at His Baptism, but at the same time there came an audible acknowledgment from Heaven by the Father of

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. iii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> S. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, *Catechetical Lectures*, iii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> See the first prayer in the Baptismal Office, and cf. IGNATIUS, *Epistle to the Ephesians*, xviii.: "Christ . . . was baptized that by His Passion He might cleanse water." S. AMBROSE says that our Lord was baptized "not wishing to be cleansed, but to cleanse the waters" (*On S. Luke*, ii. 84). So also Bishop ANDREWES, *Sermon vii. On the Holy Ghost*: "He received no cleanness, no virtue, but virtue He gave to Jordan, to the waters, to the Sacrament itself."

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke iii. 22.

<sup>5</sup> S. John i. 32, 33.

His own well-beloved Son, "Lo, a voice from Heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased."<sup>1</sup> The same voice has taught us, remarks the Venerable Bede, that we also, by the water of cleansing, and by the Spirit of sanctification, may be made the sons of God.

Thus we see that the graces pertaining to the Christian Sacrament are outlined in Christ's own Baptism—purification from sin, endowment with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the acknowledgment of our Divine Sonship.

The spiritual blessings conveyed through the Sacrament of Baptism are summed up in the word *Regeneration*. The inward and spiritual grace in the Sacrament is "a death unto sin, and a *new birth* unto righteousness; for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace."<sup>2</sup>

In the conversation with Nicodemus our Lord not only affirmed the general necessity of Baptism, but He at the same time indicated its inward grace, its effect upon the soul. "Jesus said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the Kingdom of God . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."<sup>3</sup> The effect of Baptism is, therefore, the new and heavenly<sup>4</sup> birth, the Regeneration of the soul. In one other place in the New Testament is Baptism by water expressly referred to as the means of receiving this new birth. S. Paul writes to Titus that God has "saved us, according to His mercy, through the laver

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. iii. 17. The form in which the heavenly utterance is recorded by S. Matthew—*This is My beloved Son*—indicates that the voice was heard by the Baptist as well as by our Lord Himself.

<sup>2</sup> *Church Catechism*.

<sup>3</sup> S. John iii. 3, 5. It ought not to be necessary to apologise for the use of this passage with reference to Baptism. As HOOKER says: "Of all the ancients there is not one to be named that ever did otherwise either expound or allege the place than as implying external Baptism" (*Eccles. Polity*, V. lix. 3). References to S. John iii. 5 in connexion with Baptism occur as early as the *Shepherd* of Hermas.

<sup>4</sup> *ἄνωθεν* in S. John iii. 3 includes both these meanings.

of Regeneration.”<sup>1</sup> Relying upon the plain meaning of the words of our Lord and of S. Paul the Church believes and teaches that at the moment of Baptism each soul receives a new and heavenly birth. Accordingly, when children are brought to the Font, prayers are said there, according to our own Anglican rite, for their Regeneration: “We call upon Thee for this Infant, that he, coming to Thy holy Baptism, may receive remission of his sins by spiritual *Regeneration*.” “Give Thy Holy Spirit to this Infant, that he may be *born again*.” Then immediately after the application of the Baptismal water the priest is directed to address those present: “Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this Child is *regenerate*”; and to say in thanksgiving: “We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to *regenerate* this Infant with Thy Holy Spirit.” That Regeneration is bestowed at the Font is assumed again in the prayer offered by the Bishop immediately before the laying on of hands in Confirmation, where he says: “Almighty and everliving God, Who hast vouchsafed to *regenerate* these Thy servants by *water* and the Holy Ghost.” The Regeneration of the soul in Baptism being thus explicitly taught in the formularies of the Church, “*regenerated*” and “*baptized*” may be used as synonymous and interchangeable terms, as *e.g.* in the ninth of the Thirty-nine Articles, where the same Latin word *renatis* is in one sentence translated *regenerated*, and a few lines lower down is rendered by *baptized*.<sup>2</sup> In confirmation of the doctrine of Regeneration in Baptism it ought further to be noted that in passages where the Regeneration of Christians is alluded to in the Epistles in the New Testament, the tense of the verbs used, if we take it in its strict meaning, indicates that the process is a momentary one which has taken place at a definite point of time in past

<sup>1</sup> Titus iii. 5, διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας. The idiomatic use of the preposition in the Greek denotes the means or instrument.

<sup>2</sup> This infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are *regenerated* (*renatis*) . . . there is no condemnation for them that believe and are *baptized* (*renatis*).—Art. ix.



experience. A good example is furnished by these words of S. Paul: "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers . . . shall inherit the Kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> The Aorist tense of the verbs in the last clause shows that the washing and justification spoken of is viewed as having taken place at a definite point of time, which can be none other than the moment of the Baptism of the Corinthian converts addressed. When we speak of Regeneration as the inward grace of Baptism, we must be careful to guard against a possible misunderstanding. By Regeneration is meant not a change of mind or of heart—such would be properly described as Conversion—but a change of condition or state. Baptism is the entrance upon a new state for the soul. Just as generation by the agency of human parents is for us the beginning of natural life, so Regeneration by the agency of the Holy Spirit, acting through the element of water, is the beginning of a new and better life, "which by nature we cannot have."<sup>2</sup> Man through sin is separated from God;<sup>3</sup> conceived in sin,<sup>4</sup> by natural generation he is in a state of alienation, far off<sup>5</sup> from God, a child of wrath,<sup>6</sup> but at Baptism he is, through the merits of Christ, brought nigh, brought into right relation again with God, and into a state of favour and acceptance. "Being by nature born in sin and the children of wrath, we are hereby [*i.e.* by Baptism] made the children of grace."<sup>7</sup> That Baptism is the entrance into a new state for man is sufficiently indicated by our Lord's words when He instituted the Sacrament: "Go ye and make disciples of all the nations," so runs His charge,<sup>8</sup> "baptizing them *into* . . ." The preposition (*εἰς*) is one which signifies motion towards, and its use by our Lord shows that the Sacrament He instituted is a change, a motion

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 9-11.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. lix. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Eph. ii. 13.

<sup>7</sup> See *Church Catechism*.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Baptismal Office*.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. li. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Eph. ii. 3.

<sup>8</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 19.

into something where men were not before, a transference from an old state to a new one. In the words that immediately follow Christ indicates no less plainly what this new state is: "Baptizing them into the *Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*" The *Name* of God, according to idiomatic Hebrew usage, stands for the Divine Nature as revealed to man. "We will walk in the Name of Jehovah our God for ever and ever"<sup>1</sup> means we will guide the course of our life according to that covenant relation to God which is summed up for us in His Name Jehovah. Similarly, to "*baptize into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*" means to initiate man into a new relation with God summed up in the Name of the Trinity, to bring him into a new state as the adopted son of the Father, redeemed and reconciled by the atoning work of the Son, sanctified by the indwelling Presence of the Holy Ghost.

The grace of Regeneration being thus the entrance into a new state, a blessed state of acceptance with God, a state of grace, it implies, in the first place, a break with the old state, a removal of the sin which had separated man from God. The grace of the Sacrament has first, therefore, its negative side, so to speak—"a death unto sin."<sup>2</sup> Those who come to Baptism receive "*Remission of sins* by spiritual Regeneration."<sup>3</sup> If man is to be restored and saved, remission of the sin which holds him back from God is the very first necessary step. It was the charter of the Church that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in Christ's Name unto all the nations,<sup>4</sup> and this remission of sins is dependent, so S. Peter declared to the first converts, on the reception of Baptism; for the Apostle exhorted those who by his preaching on the day of Pentecost had been convicted of sin: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins."<sup>5</sup> To

<sup>1</sup> Micah iv. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Church Catechism.*

<sup>3</sup> See the second prayer in the *Baptismal Office.*

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke xxiv. 47.

<sup>5</sup> Acts ii. 38.

the same effect Ananias is recorded to have addressed the converted Saul, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins."<sup>1</sup> With these practical exhortations we may also couple the Apostolic statement of doctrine that the Church is cleansed by Christ by the laver of water with the word.<sup>2</sup> As has been remarked above,<sup>3</sup> the symbolism of the outward sign in Baptism points obviously to purification from sin as the inward grace signified and conveyed through the Sacrament, and this spiritual blessing of remission of sin being also, as we have seen, expressly connected in the New Testament with the reception of Baptism, it is accordingly received and professed as an article of the Christian Faith that forgiveness of sins is granted in the Sacrament. "I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins" we say in the Nicene Creed. The Water of the Font is "sanctified to the mystical washing away of sin"<sup>4</sup> and becomes the "laver of Remission."<sup>5</sup> Baptism is, as has been shown, the entrance into a state of acceptance with God. This, of course, carries with it the implication that in our natural condition we are not in a state of favour with God. That Regeneration is necessary implies that there is something faulty in our condition as we are by generation. Sin has separated between man and God; and sin affects not merely the individual who commits it, but those associated with him, so that the human race, as a whole, is at a disadvantage owing to the sins of the past, and we at birth inherit a nature that has been tainted with evil. By our natural generation we are in a state of alienation from God, children of wrath, and needing to be reconciled. By our Regeneration we are brought into a state of grace. This involves the removal of the barrier of sin, whether the inherited taint or the guilt of actual sins wilfully committed. By the grace of the Sacrament of Baptism,

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxii. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. v. 26.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 193.

<sup>4</sup> See the *Benedictio Fontis* in the *Baptismal Office*.

<sup>5</sup> So BEDE calls it in describing the Baptism of Northumbrian tribes by Paulinus: "abluerē lavacro remissionis" (book ii., cap. xiv. vol. i. p. 115, ed. Plummer).

therefore, the guilt of sin is removed—and the eternal punishment due to it remitted—of original sin, that is, in the case of unconscious infants, and of actual sin besides in the case of adult subjects of Baptism. No unaided efforts on our part, no merits of our own, could avail to put away our sins,<sup>1</sup> but they are freely forgiven of God's great mercy, for the sake of the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. The ground of the remission of sins in Baptism, accordingly, is the merit of Christ; the Sacrament is the application of Christ's meritorious Passion and of His redemptive work to the individual soul. Since it is the Passion of Christ which thus gives absolving efficacy to the waters of Baptism,<sup>2</sup> with singular appropriateness is the Sign of the Cross used in the Sacrament whereby the sinner claims for himself the benefits of Christ's Passion, and is identified with His atoning Sacrifice. "All we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death. We were buried therefore with Him through Baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. . . . We who died [in our Baptism] to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?"<sup>3</sup> "Ye were buried with Him in Baptism, wherein ye were also raised with Him."<sup>4</sup> As the truth of our death with Christ, our death to sin, which S. Paul states in the passages just quoted, is expressed amongst us by the signing of the Baptized with the sign of the Cross, so in early times it was also further emphasised both by the ritual of the Sacrament and by the special occasion when it was solemnly administered. For the same truth was indicated in the custom of threefold immersion, which was explained as symbolical of burial with Christ, Who was three days in the grave. "You made," says S. Cyril of Jerusalem to the newly baptized, "the saving profession of faith, and went down thrice into the water and rose up again, here also by a symbol figur-

<sup>1</sup> See Art. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> "Christ . . . was baptized that *by His Passion* He might cleanse water."—IGNATIUS, *Epistle to the Ephesians*, xviii.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. vi. 2-4.

<sup>4</sup> Col. ii. 12.

ing the three days' burial of Christ . . . and in the same moment you died and were born again."<sup>1</sup> The setting apart of Eastertide as a special time for the solemn administration of Baptism was again significant. It was thought that at the annual commemoration of the Lord's Resurrection that Sacrament might be most fittingly received wherein man dies to the world, renouncing its pomps and vanities and the sinful lusts of the flesh, and rises with Christ to newness of life. *Filius mortis in fontem descendit, sed filius Resurrectionis ascendit.*

It has been shown that the Baptismal grace of Regeneration has in the first place what may be called its negative side ; it carries with it the breaking down of the barrier between the soul and God ; through the application of the merits of Christ sin is remitted, whether original guilt only or actual sin as well. In Baptism we die to sin. But the Sacrament is more than merely deliverance from the old state of helplessness and alienation from God, it is also the entrance upon a new and higher state, it is a death unto sin *and a new birth unto righteousness.*<sup>2</sup> It is a new birth into the family of God. In my Baptism "I was made a child of God" we are taught to say in our Catechism ; and in the Thanksgiving at the close of the Baptismal Office we say, "We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this Infant with Thy Holy Spirit, *to receive him for Thine own Child by adoption.*" The grace of remission of sins is therefore preparatory to our receiving the grace of adoption through the gift of the Holy Spirit in the same Sacrament. We receive the adoption of sons, and God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.<sup>3</sup> It is true that there is a sense in which all men born into the world are sons of God. In virtue of creation in the Divine image, man is by generation the son of God. To the sense of this universal Divine sonship S. Paul appeals in his sermon on Mars' Hill when he quotes with approval the words of the

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on the Mysteries*, ii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Church Catechism.*

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iv. 5, 6 ; cf. Rom. viii. 14-16.

Greek poet Aratus, "We also are His offspring."<sup>1</sup> Similarly in the Old Testament the prophet Malachi, when after the return from the Exile his countrymen dealt unfairly with one another, appealed to the feeling of brotherhood which ought to arise from the thought of the One common Creator. "Have we not all one Father?" he asks. "Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?"<sup>2</sup> But we should be quite wrong if, when the Divine sonship of Christians is spoken of in the New Testament, we understood the reference to be to natural gifts and to man as he is in his natural state. The appeal which is made in the New Testament to men as the sons of God is not to men as they are, or as they should be, by generation, but as they are by regeneration, as those who have been incorporated by adoption into God's Holy Family. To understand Divine sonship (in the New Testament sense) as ours by nature, is to overlook Original Sin, to ignore the effect of past sin upon the race as a whole, and may lead us, as it led Pelagius, to regard Divine grace as nothing more than natural endowment. But nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that we are by nature "children of wrath,"<sup>3</sup> and that special grace is needed to bring us into right relation with God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."<sup>4</sup> It is, as we have seen, necessary that sin should be put away, and accordingly one part of the grace of Baptism is Remission of Sins. But by Baptismal grace not merely is the work of the Fall undone, a higher gift is conferred upon us than the grace belonging to unfallen human nature. God predestinated us (Christians) unto adoption as sons, through Jesus Christ, unto Himself,<sup>5</sup> and adoption implies, not the restoration of rights which have been forfeited, but admission to new privileges "which by nature we cannot have."<sup>6</sup> The Son of God took our nature that we might share His own. He is Son of Man that we,

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvii. 28.<sup>2</sup> Mal. ii. 10.<sup>3</sup> Eph. ii. 3.<sup>4</sup> S. John iii. 6.<sup>5</sup> Eph. i. 5.<sup>6</sup> See opening Exhortation in the *Baptismal Office*.



through union with Him, may be sons of God. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God." "God sent forth His Son . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons."<sup>1</sup> Christians are, as S. Peter puts it, "partakers of the Divine Nature,"<sup>2</sup> and it is in Baptism that we are made so through incorporation into Christ. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did [at your Baptism] put on<sup>3</sup> Christ."<sup>4</sup>

We are thus made sons of God in Baptism because in the Sacrament we are incorporated into Christ the Son of God and are made partakers of His Divine Nature, being united to Him as His members.<sup>5</sup> It is a tainted nature that we inherit at birth,<sup>6</sup> so that when we speak of Original Sin we do not mean merely the imputation of Adam's sin,<sup>7</sup> nor does the theological term simply express the truth attested by all experience that men do in fact follow the example which Adam set by sinning.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly we cannot be set right in the sight of God and put into the way of salvation by imputation of Christ's righteousness merely, nor by setting ourselves in our own strength to follow the example of Christ, for what hope could there be of thus attaining to the standard He has set for us? But to set right what is amiss in us through our connexion by nature with the first Adam it is necessary that

<sup>1</sup> S. John i. 12; Gal. iv. 4, 5.

<sup>2</sup> 2 S. Peter i. 4.

<sup>3</sup> ἐνεδύσασθε. Note the tense, which denotes a momentary act, and refers it to the occasion of Baptism.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. iii. 26 27; cf. Rom. vi. 3.

<sup>5</sup> "In my Baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ" (*Church Catechism*). See 1 Cor. vi. 15; xii. 27.

<sup>6</sup> See the definition of Original Sin given in Art. ix.: "It is the fault and corruption of the nature" (vitium et depravatio naturæ).

<sup>7</sup> This is the usual Calvinistic definition. See *Westminster Confession*, VI. iii.: "they being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed."

<sup>8</sup> This was the view of Pelagius as to Original Sin. Cf. the opening words of Art. ix. of the Thirty-nine Articles as issued in 1553: "Original Sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk, which also the Anabaptists do nowadays renew."

there should be personal connexion on our part with the Second Adam<sup>1</sup> by grace, and a sharing of His righteousness. It is this incorporation into the Second Adam, the Head of Regenerate humanity, that we gain in Baptism, it is Baptism into Christ,<sup>2</sup> the putting on of Christ,<sup>3</sup> a new creation in union with Him.<sup>4</sup> Those who have been thus united to Christ live in Him and He in them.<sup>5</sup> They are members of His Body, drawing supernatural life and strength from Him, as in the human frame the hand or the foot depends upon the head. Accordingly in this new state begun in Baptism lies the possibility of the realisation of man's highest life, for it is the bringing of a new and a Divine power into human life. In Christ—by virtue of our Sacramental union with Him—we can do all things for He strengthens us.<sup>6</sup> This union of souls with Christ has further far-reaching effects, for by thus uniting individual souls to Himself Christ at the same time draws those souls to one another. Not only does He, by drawing men to Himself, reconcile them to God, but by the same act He brings them together and makes them all one. In making our peace with God He has broken down the middle wall of partition between man and man and has made all one, that He might reconcile them *in One Body* unto God.<sup>7</sup> We, then, who are one with Christ are also one in Him, we are One Body in Christ and severally members one of another.<sup>8</sup> Our union with Christ in Baptism implies, therefore, our incorporation into His Mystical Body, our introduction into a holy fellowship where all the helps and graces which God provides through Christ are enjoyed. "In one Spirit we were all baptized into One Body."<sup>9</sup> The Sacrament is therefore rightly regarded as the entrance to the spiritual blessings and privileges of membership in the Church of Christ; by it, "as by an instrument, we are grafted into the Church."<sup>10</sup> For those that come to Baptism the prayer is offered that they may be received into

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 45; cf. Rom v. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. vi. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iii. 27.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Gal. ii. 20.

<sup>6</sup> Phil. iv. 13.

<sup>7</sup> Eph. ii. 14-16.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. xii. 5.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 13.

<sup>10</sup> Art. xxvii.

Christ's Holy Church and be made lively members of the same. Immediately upon performing the act of Baptism the priest is directed to say, "We receive this Child into the congregation of Christ's flock . . . Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this Child is regenerate and grafted into the Body of Christ's Church"; and finally, at the close of the Baptismal Office, we offer thanks to God that it has pleased Him "to incorporate this Infant into His Holy Church."

The subjective conditions required for the due reception of Baptism are well stated in the Church Catechism. "What is required of persons to be baptized? Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and Faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament." Those who would pass from the old state to the new, from the state of sin to the new life of righteousness in Christ, must in the first place hate sin and desire to break with it; further, it is also necessary that they should have faith in God as able and willing to give the grace and blessing they seek, and to perform the promises attached to the Sacrament. From the very earliest times we find that Catechumens on coming to Baptism were required to profess both these conditions. There have always been two very important and impressive parts of the Baptismal ceremony<sup>1</sup>—

#### 1. *The Renunciation.*

This in our present Office takes the form of a solemn affirmative answer to the question, "Dost thou . . . renounce the Devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow nor be led by them?" The very phrases here used are of great antiquity and correspond closely with the forms used in the Baptismal service as described by ancient writers. Thus Tertullian writes: "To begin with Baptism . . . we testify in the Church under the hand of a priest that we renounce the Devil, and his

<sup>1</sup> This statement is scarcely too strong, for there may be a reference to the Baptismal interrogations in 1 S. Peter iii. 21, and to the Baptismal Profession of Faith in 1 Tim. vi. 12.

pomp, and his angels.”<sup>1</sup> S. Cyril, in his exposition of the Baptismal Office in use in the Church at Jerusalem, tells us that the candidates were brought to the outer hall of the baptistery and there, facing the west and with hand outstretched, said: “I renounce thee, Satan, and all thy works, and all thy pomp, and all thy service.”<sup>2</sup> Very similarly S. Ambrose: “Thou wentest into the baptistery: consider what questions were asked thee, and what answers thou gavest. Thou didst renounce the Devil and his works, the world and its luxury and pleasures.”<sup>3</sup>

## 2. *The Profession of Faith.*

The other great preliminary is the Profession of Faith, which is mentioned in all accounts of Baptism by ancient writers, and which indeed, in some form, must have been made by candidates from the very first.<sup>4</sup> To this Baptismal profession, at the outset modelled upon or suggested by the Formula of Baptism enjoined by Christ,<sup>5</sup> it may be regarded as beyond doubt that Creeds owe their origin. The main substance of the Apostles' Creed, which with us is used in an interrogative form as the Baptismal Profession of Faith, is indeed traceable to the Baptismal Profession of very early times.<sup>6</sup>

All ages are suitable for Baptism. Christ sanctified, says Irenæus, every age by passing through the like. For He came to save all men through Himself; all, that is, who through Him are born again to God, infants and young children and boys and young men and elders. But while people of all ages are qualified to receive Baptism, infants especially are fit subjects of the Sacrament. The Baptism of infants is most agreeable with the institution of Christ.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *De Corona*, cap. iii.

■ *Lectures on the Mysteries*, i. 2-8.

<sup>3</sup> *De Initiatis*, cap. ii.

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 124.

<sup>5</sup> S. Cyril of Jerusalem gives the Baptismal Profession thus: “I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, and in one Baptism of repentance.”—*Lectures on the Mysteries*, i. 9.

<sup>6</sup> The Baptismal Creed which S. Augustine has preserved for us in his treatises *De Fide et Symbolo* and *Sermo ad Catechumenos* is almost identical with our “Apostles' Creed.”

<sup>7</sup> Art. xxvii. See above, pp. 187-8.

For, if we regard the Sacrament as a cleansing from sin, then infants are in need of it, "forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ saith, None can enter into the Kingdom of God except he be regenerate."<sup>1</sup> Or again, when we view the Sacrament as a means of receiving Spiritual grace, we cannot think that it is impossible for infants to receive such grace, because our Lord Himself took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them.<sup>2</sup> He treated babes<sup>3</sup> as capable of receiving spiritual blessing. In the case of infants their innocence, that is their freedom from actual sin, renders them specially fit subjects for Baptism, because no barrier is opposed to the operation of the grace of God in the soul. Still, however, there remains some difficulty because infants cannot fulfil the subjective conditions which are necessary in those who come to the Sacrament—Repentance and Faith. "Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them? Because they promise them both by their sureties."<sup>4</sup> The sponsors make the solemn Renunciation and Profession of Faith in their name. If we ask further how it is that vicarious faith is accepted as a valid condition, the answer, in the first place, is that the Church acts in the matter on a well-ascertained Gospel principle. Faith is consistently set forth in the New Testament as a necessary condition in order to the appropriation of the virtue that flowed from our Lord's sacred Humanity, but it is at the same time recorded that He bestowed blessings upon those who from the nature of the case were precluded from exercising or professing faith in Him themselves, on the ground of the faith of those connected with them. Our Lord went with Jairus in answer to his prayer of faith: "My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray Thee, come and lay Thy hands upon her, that she may be healed; and she shall live."<sup>5</sup> Then when the message was brought to the ruler "Thy daughter is dead"

<sup>1</sup> See the opening Address in the *Baptismal Office*.

<sup>2</sup> S. Mark x. 16.

<sup>3</sup> βρέφη, S. Luke xviii. 15.

<sup>4</sup> *Church Catechism*.

<sup>5</sup> S. Mark v. 23.

Christ makes an appeal for faith: "Be not afraid, only believe";<sup>1</sup> and the maiden received the gift of new life on the ground of the faith of her father. Again, to quote another very clear example, the resurrection of Lazarus took place when the power of Christ had been, so to speak, put in motion by faith—not the faith of Lazarus himself, but the faith of his sister. In response to Christ's demand for faith in Himself as the Resurrection and the Life Martha made her profession, "Yea, Lord: I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."<sup>2</sup> Further, in the sequel, our Lord makes it appear that on Martha's faith it depended whether she should see the glory of God in the restoration of her brother to life.<sup>3</sup> When, therefore, the Church bestows spiritual blessings in Christ's Name upon unconscious infants on the ground of the faith of those who bring them to the Font She is acting upon a principle on which it is sufficiently clear that the Lord Himself acted. This, however, is not the whole and complete answer to the question why a vicarious faith is accepted as qualifying infants for Baptism. The faith of the god-parents is accepted because it is representative of the faith of the Church as a whole. It is the Church's faith to which they give expression when they declare their assent to the Apostles' Creed, and on this guarantee infants are received and baptized. A distinct undertaking is given that the infant will be brought up in the faith of the Church and under Christian influences, that he will be taught the solemnity of the vow and profession made in his name at the Font, and it would seem to be clear from the Baptismal Office that our Church does not contemplate an indiscriminate Baptism of young children without due security that the grace imparted will be cherished, and the privileges bestowed valued and used.

There are two passages in the New Testament record of the Apostolic Church which describe a Sacramental rite of Laying on of hands. (1) In the account of the work of

<sup>1</sup> S. Mark v. 35, 36.

<sup>2</sup> S. John xi. 27.

<sup>3</sup> S. John xi. 40.



Philip the Deacon in Samaria we read : "When the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John : who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost : for as yet He was fallen upon none of them : only they had been baptized into the Name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."<sup>1</sup> (2) Again at a later time we are told that S. Paul found at Ephesus some disciples of the Baptist associating with the members of the Church and asked them, "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given. And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism. And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him Which should come after him, that is, on Jesus. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the Name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them ; and they spake with tongues and prophesied."<sup>2</sup> Now both these passages which we have quoted evidently describe the same rite. In both cases upon those who had been duly baptized Apostolic hands were laid, and this outward sign was accompanied by the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is true that a different explanation has been suggested of the narrative in Acts viii. It has been thought by some that the laying of the Apostles' hands upon the Samaritans was intended to supplement a defective Baptism, Philip having baptized them in the Name of the Lord Jesus. If the passage stood alone the interpretation might be possible, though the narrative contains no hint that the Baptism administered by Philip was in any way defective. But such interpretation is rendered out of the question by the parallel passage in Acts xix., where the Baptism of the Ephesian disciples, which is certainly a valid

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii. 14-17.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xix. 2-6.

one, is described in the same terms, and where the laying on of hands which followed and supplemented the Baptism is performed by the same Apostle who had himself first baptized. We take these two passages, then, as describing a sacramental laying of Apostolic hands upon the baptized. It is important to point out further how these same two passages indicate a complete agreement of the Apostles in the ministration of the ordinance. The imposition of hands upon the baptized was not an extraordinary ceremony which some one Apostle performed here or there of his own motion, but in the narrative of the Acts the rite takes its place naturally as belonging to the regular system of the Apostolic Church. The imposition of hands upon the Samaritans was the work of two Apostles acting in concert, and we are, moreover, expressly told that SS. Peter and John were not simply acting on their own initiative in the matter, but that their mission was undertaken, and no doubt their action determined, after deliberation, by the wish of the Apostolic College at Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> Again, that S. Paul, who was not of the original number of the Apostles, pursued exactly the same course and administered the same ordinance,<sup>2</sup> may be taken as indicating that the ordinance in question was part of that system for the working of the Church which the Apostles, led by the Holy Spirit, organised after the day of Pentecost.

We may thus take it as proved that the rite of imposition of hands upon the baptized was regularly practised in the Apostolic Church, but then we are confronted by a further question. Was this ordinance intended to be permanent, or were the gifts conveyed by Apostolic hands merely those miraculous gifts which characterised the Apostolic Church, so that when these special and noteworthy manifestations of the

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Note, too, that S. Luke's language seems to indicate that S. Paul's action in the imposition of hands was normal and such as would be expected: "They were baptized into the Name of the Lord Jesus, *and when Paul had laid his hands upon them*, the Holy Ghost came on them" (Acts xix. 5, 6).

Holy Spirit's action ceased, the outward sign should have ceased also? Some have thought that the gift of the Holy Spirit of which we read in the New Testament as bestowed by laying on of hands consisted only in the power to speak with tongues, to prophesy, or to work miracles, and those who have taken this view have accordingly discontinued Confirmation as a Sacramental ordinance of the Church. This was the course which the Lutheran Reformers took in the sixteenth century. That part of Confirmation which embraced an examination of the young in doctrine and a profession of faith on their part they were willing to retain as profitable, but the Sacramental rite, as the Western Church had been accustomed to retain and administer it, they counted but a vain shadow. Their position is clearly stated by themselves in the following words: "We do not doubt that the Apostles, at the beginning of the Gospel, which was revealed and confirmed on the day of Pentecost, conferred by imposition of hands a wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit upon those who believed in Christ, so that they spoke with diverse tongues. And we think it most profitable that children and youths be examined by the Pastors of their Church in the Catechism, and be commended if they have been piously and rightly instructed, but be corrected if ill instructed. But, on the ground of this temporal action, and one confined to the persons of the Apostles themselves, a general and perpetual Sacrament ought not to be instituted in the Church without a definite command of God."<sup>1</sup> The Swiss Reformers took the same view of the matter as the Lutherans; Calvin, their great leader, was anxious that the Reformed should retain the custom of catechising young people that they might publicly profess their faith.<sup>2</sup> Imposition of hands, too, performed simply by way of benediction, he approved and wished to preserve,<sup>3</sup> but the Sacramental rite of Confirmation, as practised in the

<sup>1</sup> *Wurtemberg Confession* (1552), Art. xi. See also *Saxon Confession* (1551), Art. xix.

<sup>2</sup> *Institutes*, IV. xix. 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

Western Church, he condemns and repudiates,<sup>1</sup> altogether denying that it can be justified by Apostolic precedent.<sup>2</sup>

The Anglican Church, at the Reformation, dealt very differently with Confirmation, retaining it as a rite of perpetual obligation in the Church, and regarding it as having both Sacramental character and Apostolic precedent. That it has both these is evidently implied in the Collect which follows the imposition of hands in the "Order of Confirmation." The Bishop there prays: "We make our humble supplications unto Thee for these Thy servants, upon whom . . . we have now laid our hands, to certify them (by this sign) of Thy favour and gracious goodness towards them." The imposition of hands is thus declared to be performed as a Sacramental rite, *i.e.* as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. Then again the Apostolic character of Confirmation is also distinctly affirmed in the same petition: "We make our humble supplications unto Thee for these Thy servants, upon whom (after the example of Thy holy Apostles) we have now laid our hands." The English Church is thus committed to the position, denied by Continental Reformers, that the "laying on of hands" of which we read in the New Testament as practised by the Apostles was not merely for the bestowal of visible and miraculous gifts of the Spirit. Certainly we read that miraculous manifestations were the immediate effect of the gift,<sup>3</sup> nevertheless that from the beginning graces, not miracles, were the end of Confirmation<sup>4</sup> is a conclusion we can scarcely avoid in view of the context in which this "laying on of hands" is mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews.<sup>5</sup> The writer couples it with Baptism,<sup>6</sup> and places

<sup>1</sup> *Institutes*, IV. xix. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xix. 6.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. i. 21, 22.

<sup>5</sup> "Let us cease to speak of the first principles of Christ, and press on unto perfection; not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment" (Heb. vi. 1, 2).

<sup>6</sup> It will be noted that the six subjects mentioned fall into three groups of two: (a) repentance and faith, (b) baptisms and laying on of hands,

it side by side with repentance and faith, and with resurrection and eternal judgment, as amongst the foundations or first principles of Christianity. That ordinance must surely be a means of spiritual grace and an abiding institution—no mere temporary dispensation of miraculous endowment—which the inspired writer can class in such a category as fundamental in the Religion of Christ. The outward manifestations were, we may suppose, given at the outset to convince men, both the recipients themselves and others, of the reality of the spiritual gift. Such outward results no longer follow because they are no longer needed from an evidential point of view, their subsequent cessation is equivalent to a declaration from Christ that the magnificence of His reign and the dignity of His word have been sufficiently manifested,<sup>1</sup> but it does not argue the Lord's desertion of His Church, nor does the absence of the visible signs of the Holy Spirit's power in any way affect the bestowal of the unseen spiritual dower. In taking up this position with regard to Confirmation the English Church has followed the Primitive Church and Patristic testimony; for, as Hooker says, "the Fathers held Confirmation as an ordinance Apostolic, always profitable in God's Church, although not always accompanied with equal largeness of those external effects which gave it countenance at the first."<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, though not ranked with Baptism and the Holy Eucharist as necessary to salvation,<sup>3</sup> an honoured and very important place is given in our Church system to Confirmation. The Order of Confirmation sets out clearly three aspects of the rite as now administered amongst us. (1) It is a spiritual Confirma-

(c) resurrection and judgment. In the first and third of these groups the second subject is closely connected with the first, and is its natural sequel and complement. Therefore we conclude that the "laying on of hands" of which the writer speaks is that ceremony which appears in Acts viii. and xix. as connected with Baptism, and not imposition of hands in ordination (Acts vi. 6; xiii. 3), benediction, or some other ceremony.

<sup>1</sup> See CALVIN, *Institutes*, IV. xix. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ecclesiastical Polity*, V. lxvi. 4.

<sup>3</sup> On the ground that the outward sign in Confirmation is not expressly commanded by Christ Himself in the Gospel.

tion, a strengthening of the spiritual life begun in Baptism by the bestowal of special graces of the Holy Spirit. "Strengthen them," the bishop prays for the candidates before him, "we beseech Thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them Thy manifold gifts of grace." Then immediately after, while laying his hand upon each one, he says, "Defend, O Lord, this Thy child with Thy heavenly grace, that he may continue Thine for ever: and daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come unto Thy everlasting Kingdom." (2) Confirmation is also the entrance upon the full privileges of membership in the Church. "There shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed."<sup>1</sup> (3) The rite is accompanied by a solemn renewal of the promise made in the candidate's name by his sponsors at Baptism. "Do ye here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your Baptism; ratifying and confirming the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe, and to do, all those things which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for you?" And every one shall audibly answer, "I do."<sup>2</sup> The Puritans, who in this, as in other matters, followed the theology of Geneva, objected strongly in 1661 to the wording of the Collect in the Order of Confirmation, and quoted Article xxv. as supporting their view. Their objection was stated thus: "We desire that the practice of the Apostles may not be alleged as a ground of this imposition of hands for the Confirmation of children, both because the Apostles did never use it in that case, as also because the Articles of the Church of England declare it to be a 'corrupt imitation of the Apostles' practice.' We desire that imposition of hands may not be made, as here it is, a sign to certify children of God's grace and favour toward them; because this seems to speak it

<sup>1</sup> See the rubric at the end of the *Order of Confirmation*.

<sup>2</sup> This feature of the Service dates from the last revision of the Prayer Book (1662).



a Sacrament, and is contrary to that forementioned twenty-fifth Article." The answer of the Bishops defended the Collect in question, and quite cleared up the position of the English Church with regard to this Ordinance. They replied that "Prayer after the imposition of hands is grounded upon the practice of the Apostles (Heb. vi. 2 and Acts viii. 17); nor doth the twenty-fifth Article say that Confirmation is a corrupt imitation of the Apostles' practice, but that the five commonly called Sacraments have ground partly of the corrupt following the Apostles, etc., which may be applied to some other of these five, but cannot be applied to Confirmation, unless we make the Church speak contradictions."<sup>1</sup>

The bestowal of the Holy Spirit through the laying-on of hands is in the New Testament closely connected with Baptism. This is the case both in the imposition of hands upon the Samaritan converts by SS. Peter and John,<sup>2</sup> and in the "Confirmation" of the Ephesian disciples by S. Paul.<sup>3</sup> It is specially to be remarked, besides, that the way in which Baptism and the laying on of hands are mentioned and coupled together in the Epistle to the Hebrews presupposes that the rite of imposition of hands to which the author refers is in some way connected with, or related to, Baptism.<sup>4</sup> The relation in which the two rites stand seems to be indicated in what is recorded of the Samaritan converts in Acts. viii., for the particular expression used—"as yet the Holy Ghost was fallen upon none of them; *only they had been baptized*"<sup>5</sup>—may be taken as showing that Baptism was viewed as *incomplete* without the bestowal of the Holy Spirit through the imposition of the Apostles' hands. It agrees with this that S. Paul after baptizing the Ephesian disciples follows up this action at once with imposition of hands as a natural sequel and completion of the ceremony. When we come

<sup>1</sup> CARDWELL, *Conferences*, pp. 329, 359.

<sup>2</sup> Acts viii. 14-17.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xix. 2-6.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. vi. 1, 2. See above, p. 213, n. 6, and compare besides Acts ii. 38; Titus iii. 5, where there is perhaps similar reference to the association of the two rites.

<sup>5</sup> Acts viii. 16.

to consider Patristic testimony on the point in question we find that the close connexion of Baptism and Confirmation, and the treatment of the latter as the *completion* of the former is usual in the writings of the Fathers. Thus Tertullian speaks of Baptism as a preliminary forgiveness of sins, and of Confirmation as conveying the gift of the Spirit. "The flesh is washed that the soul may be rid of its stains . . . the flesh is overshadowed by the imposition of the hand, that the soul also may be illuminated by the Spirit."<sup>1</sup> S. Cyprian points out that it is impossible for men to be fully consecrated until they have received Confirmation as well as Baptism. "It is impossible," he writes, "for them to be fully consecrated and to be the sons of God until they are born of either Sacrament."<sup>2</sup> Again, in another place the same Father regards Confirmation as the perfecting of the baptized with the seal of the Lord. "This is still our usage," he says, "that those who are baptized in the Church should be presented to the prelates of the Church, and by means of our prayer and the laying on of our hand, should obtain the Holy Ghost and be perfected with the seal of the Lord."<sup>3</sup> Similarly S. Augustine implies that Baptism is completed by the "laying on of hands"; indeed, he regards Baptism as composed of several ceremonies or "sacraments," of which imposition of hands is the crowning one. Thus in one of his sermons he says: "He was baptized, he was sanctified, he was anointed, he received the imposition of the hand. When all the Sacraments were accomplished, he was taken."<sup>4</sup> We may refer to one more passage illustrating the same point. Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, writes of Novatian that "thinking himself to be at the point of death he was baptized by affusion in the bed whereon he lay. . . . But when

<sup>1</sup> *De Resurrectione Carnis*, cap. viii.

<sup>2</sup> *Epistle LXXII.* ii. (ed. Goldhorn).

<sup>3</sup> *Epistle LXXIII.* ix. (ed. Goldhorn).

<sup>4</sup> *Sermon cccxxiv.* There is evidently a reference in this passage to (1) the act of baptism, (2) the chrism—"he was anointed," (3) imposition of hands, and (4) perhaps also, as Dr. Mason thinks, to the signing with the Cross in the words "he was sanctified." See *The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism*, p. 83.

he recovered from his sickness he did not obtain the remaining things, which one ought to partake of according to the rule of the Church, nor was he sealed by the bishop. But as he did not obtain this, how could he have obtained the Holy Ghost?"<sup>1</sup> This passage clearly implies that after the act of baptism there are "remaining things" without which the Sacrament was not regarded as complete, and chief amongst these is mentioned the "sealing" by imposition of the bishop's hands. Very many more quotations might be given, and Dr. Mason in his work on *The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism* has collected and commented on a great number, which show that in the view of the Fathers generally Baptism and Confirmation were so closely connected as to form one complex rite,<sup>2</sup> the latter being regarded as the completion of the whole.

The two rites of Baptism and Imposition of hands were thus intimately associated in thought because in practice they had been administered together or in as close connexion as possible. In the New Testament examples already discussed the imposition of Apostolic hands followed in the one case immediately,<sup>3</sup> and in the other as soon as might be,<sup>4</sup> after the reception of Baptism. In accordance with this Apostolic and Scriptural precedent Confirmation was administered immediately after Baptism for a thousand years throughout the whole Church, as it still regularly is in the Eastern Church at the present day.<sup>5</sup> In Western Christendom, on the other hand, now for nearly a thousand years, the two rites have been separated and Confirmation administered to those

<sup>1</sup> Cornelius' letter is given by EUSEBIUS, *Church History*, VI. cap. xliii. p. 215 (ed. Bright).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. e.g.: "The gift of the Holy Ghost, which is given in Baptism through the imposition of the hand of the Bishops."—PRIMASIUS on Heb. xiii. 25, quoted in MASON, *The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism*, pp. 109, 110.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xix. 5, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Acts viii. 16, 17.

<sup>5</sup> In the Eastern Church every priest who baptizes may also administer a valid "Confirmation," provided that the "Chrism" used for the anointing has been first consecrated by a bishop.

baptized in infancy when they are arriving at years of discretion, when life is opening out before them, and they are beginning to feel its responsibilities. Amongst the causes which have contributed to the separation of Confirmation from Baptism in the Western Church we may refer particularly to two: (1) In the early Church Baptism was administered only or chiefly at the special seasons of Easter and Pentecost,<sup>1</sup> and it was then administered either by the Bishop himself or under his immediate direction,<sup>2</sup> and the newly baptized were at once confirmed by him on leaving the font. The extension of the administration of Baptism to other times and ordinary occasions, when the Bishop, who alone could confirm, was not present, led to the separation of the two rites, Confirmation being administered, as it now is amongst us, in periodical visits. "The cause," says Hooker, "of severing Confirmation from Baptism (for most commonly they went together) was sometimes in the minister, which being of inferior degree might baptize but not confirm, as in their case it came to pass whom Peter and John did confirm, whereas Philip had before baptized them; and in theirs of whom S. Jerome hath said, I deny not but the custom of the Churches is that the Bishop should go abroad, and imposing his hands pray for the gift of the Holy Ghost on them whom presbyters and deacons far off in lesser cities have already baptized."<sup>3</sup> (2) Another cause which no doubt contributed to the dissociation of Confirmation from Baptism was the growth and general adoption of the practice of Infant Baptism, it being then felt that the former rite was scarcely applicable in its full significance to the baptized infant. Hooker notes this reason also as having to some extent accounted for the postponement of Confirmation. "Sometime," he writes, "the cause of severing Confirmation from Baptism was in the parties that received Baptism being infants, at which age they might be very well admitted to live in the family; but because to fight

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 189, n. 3.

<sup>3</sup> HOOKER, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, V. lxvi. 5, referring to S. Jerome *Adv. Lucif.*, 4.

in the army of God, to discharge the duties of a Christian man, to bring forth the fruits and to do the works of the Holy Ghost their time of ability was not yet come (so that Baptism were not deferred) there could by stay of their Confirmation no harm ensue but rather good.”<sup>1</sup>

The two ceremonies of Baptism and Confirmation having been for so long closely associated, and, as has been shown, having been regarded in early times as forming practically one complex rite, the question naturally arises, What are we to regard as the distinctive grace of Confirmation? According to the primitive and Patristic theory, which we have illustrated by quotations above, it stands to Baptism in the relation of the *completion* of the Sacrament.<sup>2</sup> The same view of it is implied in the title Seal, or Sealing,<sup>3</sup> often given to it, for Sealing is a ratification or completion of a preceding act, and the application of the figure to Confirmation suggests that thereby God’s seal is set to what He has already done in and for the soul. This view of Confirmation seems to suggest the true answer to our question as to its distinctive grace and object. While Baptism makes men Christians, Confirmation makes them perfect Christians. The one rite bestows remission of sins, the other growth in grace; through the one is given life, through the other spiritual strength.<sup>4</sup> For Baptism,

<sup>1</sup> *Ecclesiastical Polity*, V. lxvi. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Amongst the conditions insisted on, according to Bede, by S. Augustine of Canterbury in his conference with the British Bishops was “the *completion* of the administration of Baptism according to the custom of the holy Roman and Apostolic Church” (*Bede*, book ii. cap. ii.). This is generally thought to refer to Confirmation. See the note in Plummer’s edition of *Bede*, vol. ii. pp. 75, 76.

<sup>3</sup> The use of this name for Confirmation is doubtless derived from those passages of the New Testament where the idea of sealing is connected with the gift of the Holy Spirit. See especially Eph. i. 13, 14, iv. 30; 2 Cor. i. 21, 22.

<sup>4</sup> This explanation of the grace of Confirmation rests on the analogy between the physical and the spiritual life of man. Cf. S. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiæ*, III. lxxii. 1: “As a man receives spiritual life by Baptism, which is spiritual regeneration, so in Confirmation he receives a certain perfect age of spiritual life.”

the Sacrament of our Regeneration, does not carry with it a change of nature instant and complete, but is the bringing of us into a new state, a new relation with God. That our nature may be changed for the better, and that we may progress in holiness, the continual work of the indwelling Spirit is necessary, the daily triumph, by His help, of grace over sin; having been regenerated and made God's children by adoption and grace we need to be daily renewed by His Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> "The Fathers everywhere impute unto Confirmation that gift or grace of the Holy Ghost, not which maketh us first Christian men, but when we are made such assisteth us in all virtue, armeth us against temptation and sin."<sup>2</sup> We might therefore explain the grace of Confirmation by saying that while in Baptism we receive the indwelling Spirit to incorporate us into Christ and make us His members, Confirmation completes the work begun, by the bestowal of special graces of the same Holy Spirit for our Christian warfare,<sup>3</sup> when we have passed from infancy and our ability has come to fight in the army of God, and to discharge the duties of Christian men.<sup>4</sup> While the one rite makes us members of Christ, the other strengthens us to be His warriors. Others have preferred to state the truth as to the grace given in Confirmation in somewhat different terms, affirming that, while Baptism admits us to the congregation of God's people, Confirmation admits us to our full privileges as God's chosen people by consecrating us to that holy Priesthood of which S. Peter writes as belonging to all Christians when he says, "Ye are an elect race, a royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession."<sup>5</sup> Viewing it in this way we may look upon Confirmation as the layman's Ordination. The fact that the outward sign in Confirmation is the same as in Ordination—the imposition of the Bishop's hands—naturally suggests that

<sup>1</sup> See the Collect for Christmas Day.

<sup>2</sup> HOOKER, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, V. lxvi. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. CALVIN, *Institutes*, IV. xix. 5.

<sup>4</sup> See HOOKER, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, V. lxvi. 7, quoted above, p. 220.

<sup>5</sup> I S. Peter ii. 9.



there is some analogy between the two rites. This may, perhaps, best be expressed by saying that in Confirmation we are marked as God's own by a special consecration and definitely committed to His active service, in the strength of the grace which the Holy Spirit bestows upon us for the purpose. This consecration in Confirmation was in old times, and still is in the East, impressively set forth by the outward sign of Unction<sup>1</sup> which accompanied it, and which indicated that the rite was a solemn anointing of the Christian to the Priestly Office which it is his high privilege to exercise as a member of the Body of Christ. It may be further remarked that when we regard Confirmation in this aspect we see how natural it is that it should be considered as a prerequisite for participation in the Eucharist wherein especially the Body of Christ is joined with the Head in Heaven in the exercise of His Priestly function.

<sup>1</sup> It has sometimes been thought, not altogether without reason, that there may be a reference in some places in the New Testament to the use of Unction as an outward sign in connexion with the bestowal of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thus S. John says, "Ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (First Epistle ii. 20; cf. also *v.* 27), and S. Paul seems to make a similar allusion—"He that stablisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; Who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. i. 21, 22). On the other hand, the custom of using the Chrism for anointing candidates after their baptism may have been suggested by the New Testament passages. At any rate, the use of the Chrism is ancient. Tertullian mentions it as well as imposition of hands, and says that it belonged to Primitive discipline ("de pristina disciplina," *De Baptismo*, capp. vii. viii.). S. Cyril of Jerusalem describes it as administered in his day, and explains its significance in his *Lectures on the Mysteries*. S. Augustine, too, alludes to Unction as a Sacramental sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit. "In the unction," he says, "we have a sacrament; the virtue itself is invisible. The invisible unction is the Holy Spirit" (*Hom.* iii. 2). The Chrism was long continued in the Western Church, as it still is in the East, as a Sacramental sign in Confirmation. In our own Church the formula of Confirmation in use before the Reformation ran thus: "I sign thee, N, with the sign of the Cross ☩ and confirm thee with Chrism of salvation. In the Name of the Father ☩ and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." (See BLUNT, *Annotated Prayer Book*, p. 443.)

Some theologians would argue that the inward grace of Confirmation is much more than we have stated above, that spiritual life is not merely strengthened or increased thereby, but that it is even initiated as far as the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit is concerned. Thus the conclusion to which Dr. Mason's reasoning, in his work on *The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism*, leads is that while in Baptism we are regenerated and brought under the Divine Spirit's guidance in a way in which the unbaptized are not, yet the objective personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in us is the virtue of the "laying on of hands, and that this is not effected in us until Baptism has been completed by Confirmation."<sup>1</sup> Those who take this view point out that in the writings of the Fathers, where the complex rite made up of Baptism and Confirmation is treated of, the preparatory blessing of remission of sins is connected with Baptism, but the coming of the Holy Ghost to dwell in the Christian is regarded as the inward grace of Confirmation.<sup>2</sup> But though this opinion that the presence of the Holy Ghost as the indwelling Spirit is the special grace of Confirmation has been commended to our acceptance in Dr. Mason's learned and carefully written treatise, and has been urged besides by some who are anxious to recover Confirmation from neglect, there are, nevertheless, some very serious difficulties in the way of adopting it.

1. It is not easy to define exactly what grace of the Holy Spirit is conferred in Baptism alone, when it is not completed by the administration of Confirmation.

2. The theory that the grace of Confirmation is the first gift of the indwelling Spirit is not very easily made to fit the language of our formularies. The idea that a person who has been baptized but not confirmed is only prepared for the abode of the Holy Spirit, but has not received the gift of the Spirit as a personal indwelling Presence, is difficult to reconcile with

<sup>1</sup> See *The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism*, p. 450, and cf. *The Faith of the Gospel*, pp. 281, 282.

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. the quotation from Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, given above, p. 218.

some passages in our Baptismal Office, such as the opening exhortation: "I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of His bounteous mercy He will grant to this Child that thing which by nature he cannot have, that he may be *baptized with water and the Holy Ghost*." Or, again, we might refer to the petition: "*Give Thy Holy Spirit* to this Infant that he may be born again."

3. Further, it is not at all easy to understand how there could be vital membership in Christ without a partaking of His life-giving Spirit. If Baptism is the entrance to the New Dispensation, the Sacrament whereby we put on Christ, it would seem to follow that the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians by virtue of their Baptism. As members of Christ they receive the gift of a new nature, and as partakers of His Resurrection life they partake also of His indwelling Spirit and become temples of the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup>

4. It may be mentioned as an additional difficulty in the way of accepting the theory we are discussing that it exalts Confirmation at the expense of Baptism; in fact it makes a Sacramental ordinance, of which there is no New Testament record that it was directly ordained by Christ, of more importance and of higher significance in the Church's system than one of those two Sacraments which the Evangelists expressly record that He instituted, and which the Church for that reason has accounted generally necessary to salvation.

In view of the arguments adduced the sounder opinion would seem to be that our spiritual life, having been begun in Baptism, is strengthened by the plenary gift of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation. As an authoritative statement of the doctrines of the Orthodox Eastern Church puts it: "Unction with Chrism<sup>2</sup> is a Sacrament in which the baptized believer receives the gifts

<sup>1</sup> "They who are in Christ, members of His Body, must needs partake of the Spirit that is in Him, their Head. Neither doth the Spirit of Christ only follow upon, but certainly accompanies, the Sacrament of Baptism, when duly administered according to His institution."—Bishop BEVERIDGE, *Sermons*, vol. ii., sermon xxxv.

<sup>2</sup> Corresponding to Confirmation in the Western Church.

of the Holy Ghost for growth and strength in spiritual life.”<sup>1</sup> We do not in Confirmation receive for the first time the indwelling of the Spirit. “The grace of our Baptism grafts us upon the Second Adam, and we share His Risen Life, which is permeated with the indwelling of the Spirit. The germs of all future gifts and graces of the Spirit are ours by virtue of our Baptismal incorporation with Christ. The development of these germs, and our equipment for active ministry and work, must be sought in that participation of the sevenfold activities of the Holy Spirit which forms the inward and spiritual grace of our Confirmation.”<sup>2</sup> The doctrine thus well stated by Dr. Wirgman seems to be that of the Anglican “Order of Confirmation” where, in the prayer which precedes the laying on of hands, the sevenfold gift is prayed for as the Sacramental blessing sought. “Strengthen them, we beseech Thee O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them Thy manifold gifts of grace ; the spirit of wisdom and understanding ; the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength ; the spirit of knowledge and true godliness ; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of Thy holy fear, now and for ever.”

<sup>1</sup> *Longer Catechism of the Orthodox Church*, question 307.

<sup>2</sup> WIRGMAN, *The Doctrine of Confirmation*, p. 53.

## CHAPTER XI

### SACRAMENTS ADMINISTERED BY THE CHURCH

#### B. THE HOLY EUCHARIST

THE central idea of the Eucharist is that it is a representation on earth of what Christ Himself is ever doing in Heaven. In this great service the Body is joined with the Head in His High-Priestly action and pleads before the Father the merits of His all-sufficient Sacrifice.

Christ—crucified, risen, and ascended—is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and our position as Christians, with all the spiritual privileges that we enjoy, depends upon His Mediation Who now appears in the presence of God for us,<sup>1</sup> and ever liveth to make intercession for us.<sup>2</sup> This Mediation of Christ in Heaven is, in Scripture, represented to us in Sacrificial form. In the highest Heaven Christ is the Lamb “as it had been slain,” *i.e.* slain in Sacrifice, and the hymns sung before the Throne are hymns of Sacrifice. In his vision S. John saw “in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain. . . . And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art Thou . . . for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy Blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth. And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders . . . saying with a great

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ix. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 34; Heb. vii. 25.

voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing."<sup>1</sup>

Whatever realities may underlie the imagery of S. John's Apocalypse it teaches that in Heaven Christ mediates through His Sacrificial Death, that amid all the glory round about the Throne He ever bears in His sacred Body the memorial of His Sacrifice, and by His presence pleads His atoning Death before the Father. This same truth of Christ's Sacrificial Mediation is more fully and explicitly set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The author treats the entry of the High Priest into the Holy of Holies with the blood of the victim, under the Old Dispensation, as typical of Christ's entrance into Heaven. "In the things which we are saying," he writes, "the chief point is this: We have such a High Priest, Who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the Heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. For every High Priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is necessary that this High Priest also have somewhat to offer."<sup>2</sup> And again, "Christ having come a High Priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation, nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own Blood, entered in once for all into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption . . . for Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into Heaven itself, now to appear before the Face of God for us."<sup>3</sup>

In the same Epistle from which we have just quoted the writer several times emphasises the perpetual efficacy of the Sacrifice of Christ, offered once for all upon the Cross. Christ was, he tells us, "*once* offered to bear the sins of many."<sup>4</sup> His Body was "*offered once for all*,"<sup>5</sup> and "after

<sup>1</sup> Rev. v. 6, 9, 10, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. viii. 1-3.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. ix. 11, 12, 24.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. ix. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. x. 10.



He had offered *one* Sacrifice for sins *for ever*, He sat down on the right hand of God.”<sup>1</sup> This same truth of the sufficiency of Christ’s Sacrifice, once made, finds forcible expression in our Anglican formularies. Thus, in the Thirty-nine Articles it is stated, “Christ came to be the Lamb without spot, Who, by sacrifice of Himself, *once made*, should take away the sin of the world”;<sup>2</sup> and again, “the Offering of Christ, *once made*, is the perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world.”<sup>3</sup> This language agrees exactly with that which we use at the most solemn moment of the Eucharistic Service, in the Prayer of Consecration, when we speak of Christ as having made, “by the *One* Oblation of Himself, *once offered*, a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.” We do well thus to insist on the perfection of the One Sacrifice, but at the same time it must be remembered that this truth is in no way inconsistent with the Sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist as the earthly counterpart of Christ’s present pleading in Heaven. The Epistle to the Hebrews which dwells upon the unique character and the all-sufficiency of the Sacrifice of Calvary, once made, also teaches with equal force and plainness that Christ is *a Priest for ever*. Abiding for ever, He hath His Priesthood unchangeable.<sup>4</sup> By the Divine oath He has been constituted a Priest for ever, after the Order of Melchizedek.<sup>5</sup> This implies that in Heaven He ever performs the action characteristic of a Priest, He ever there offers Sacrifice, for, “seeing that every High Priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices, it is of necessity that this High-Priest have somewhat also to offer.”<sup>6</sup> The Sacrifice once offered on the Cross can, indeed, never be repeated or supplemented,<sup>7</sup> but its propitiatory virtue is ever-living and continuous, and the fulness of that propitiation is pleaded by our Lord before the Throne in Heaven, and at the Altar of the Church on earth, whenever the Commemoration of

<sup>1</sup> Heb. x. 12.<sup>2</sup> Art. xv.<sup>3</sup> Art. xxxi.<sup>4</sup> Heb. vii. 24.<sup>5</sup> Heb. v. 6; vi. 20; vii. 17, 21.<sup>6</sup> Heb. viii. 3.<sup>7</sup> Cf. Heb. x. 18, 26.

His Death, which He Himself commanded to be made, is there exhibited.

“ His Manhood pleads where now It lives  
On Heaven’s eternal Throne,  
And where in mystic rite He gives  
Its Presence to His own.”<sup>1</sup>

The Heavenly Sanctuary is thus the centre of all Christian worship. There, in the Holy of Holies, the High Priest leads the Church’s worship, and where the Head is there the Body also is united with Him in His action. The Church in heart and mind thither ascends, and spiritually Christ brings us, in union with Himself, into Heaven. At the words “Lift up your hearts” the worshippers on earth are in spirit lifted up into Heaven, entering in spirit the Holy of Holies, and joining with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of Heaven in the Triumphal Hymn. Then, exercising our royal priesthood,<sup>2</sup> and using at the Altar the very acts and words of our Lord Himself, we make before the Father, and in the course of a prayer addressed to Him, the memorial Christ commanded us to make in correspondence with the memorial He Himself ever makes in Heaven. Thus is the Church, in priestly capacity, enabled to plead His Death below, even as He, the great High Priest, pleads above. At the Altar we show to the Father the Body and Blood of the living and present Saviour, Who once died for us upon the Cross, and Who not only once for all made propitiation, but Who *is* the Propitiation for our sins.<sup>3</sup>

The Eucharist is not a repetition of the Sacrifice offered upon the Cross, nor is it, strictly speaking, a continuation of the same, but it derives its Sacrificial efficacy from Christ’s presentation of Himself, with the memorial of His Sacrifice, before the Father’s Throne, in which action of His we are enabled, through the Sacrament He has given us, to join

<sup>1</sup> From a Eucharistic Hymn by Dr. Wm. Bright. See further *Ancient Collects*, by the same author, p. 144, note.

<sup>2</sup> 1 S. Peter ii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> 1 S. John ii. 2.

with Him. The Heavenly Offering and the earthly counterpart are alike *one with the Sacrifice of the Cross*. The Sacrament is no reiteration of, or addition to, the Sacrifice of Christ, but it is the same Sacrifice at another stage of its completion. For, in the teaching of Scripture, Sacrifice is a complex action consisting of several stages.

Three actions were, in the first place, performed by the person on whose behalf the Sacrifice was offered :—

- (a) The victim was presented and willingly surrendered.
- (b) The offerer laid his hands upon the victim, making the animal his substitute.
- (c) The victim was slain.

Then followed :—

- (d) The sprinkling of the blood, the pleading of the Sacrifice before God to make atonement.
- (e) The consumption of the victim, whether wholly by fire (as in the Burnt Offering), or by the partaking of the priest, or of the priest together with the offerer and his family (as in the Sin and Peace Offerings).

All these are constituent parts of one Sacrificial action, and are all present in the One true and perfect Sacrifice of Christ which they foreshadowed :—

- (a) There was the perfect surrender of the will of Christ, which found its final expression in the Agony in Gethsemane.<sup>1</sup>
- (b) He was our Representative Who bare our sins in His own Body.<sup>2</sup>
- (c) The Death upon the Cross was the slaying of the Victim.
- (d) and (e) The High - Priestly pleading of Christ in Heaven, and the earthly counterpart of this in the Eucharist, wherein also we feed upon the Victim, correspond to the other constituent parts of the act of Sacrifice.

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xxvi. 39-44.

<sup>2</sup> 1 S. Pet. ii. 24.

Accordingly the Sacrament, whether considered as the pleading of Christ's Death before the Father, or as the Communion of His Body and Blood, is a Sacrificial action; it is one with, and a part of, that great Sacrificial action of the Lord for the sins of the whole world, wherein the actual Death upon the Cross, once for all undergone, takes its place as the slaying of the Victim. It will be seen to follow at once from what has been said that, the Heavenly Offering of Christ and the earthly Oblation in the Eucharist being thus one with the Sacrifice of the Cross, it is no detracting from the unique character and perpetual efficacy of the Sacrifice on Calvary to speak of the Eucharist as a Sacrifice. It follows equally that there cannot be in the Eucharist any fresh subjection of Christ to pain or death. Roman Catholic writers, in their anxiety to indicate the true and proper Sacrificial character of the Eucharist, have sometimes written as though Christ in every Eucharist were subjected to change and involved in fresh pain, and some Anglican theologians of the Evangelical school have, strangely enough, been betrayed into very similar language, so as to affirm, *e.g.*, that "the Body and the Blood, as set before the believer's inner eye in the Sacred Supper, are the Lord's Body and the Lord's Blood as in death. . . . The Body is presented there and then as the Body torn and lifeless on the Tree; the Blood as the gore of mortal wounds, the stream dropped from the Lord's lacerated frame upon the Cross."<sup>1</sup> Such language may easily lead to misconception, for Christ is present with us in our Eucharist in the same way as He is in Heaven; it is the Living Lord who pleads for us the abiding efficacy of His self-sacrifice once for all made;<sup>2</sup> it is, according to Scripture, the Living Bread, not a dead Christ, that is given for the food of our souls.<sup>3</sup> The Presence is real, the pleading is

<sup>1</sup> Dr. H. C. G. Moule at the Islington Conference, as reported in the Press, February, 1899.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. vii. 25, "*liveth* to make intercession."

<sup>3</sup> S. John vi. 51 *et seqq.*

real, but the *Death* of Christ in the Eucharist is *figuratively* set forth, as Thomas Aquinas recognised when he wrote, "The celebration of this Sacrament is a *representative image* of the Passion of Christ, which is His true immolation." There is in the Eucharist a mystical, not a literal, separation of the Lord's Body and Blood. His death is figuratively represented, just as it was at the Institution of the Sacrament, when our Lord Himself said, "This is My Body which is being broken . . . This is My Blood which is being poured out," though at the precise moment His Body had not as yet been subjected to pain and death. Similarly in His intercession before the Throne, there is no more pain and death, but the death once accomplished in time is figuratively represented, Christ appears in Heaven for us the Lamb *as it had been slain*.<sup>1</sup> The Blood of the Sacrifice with which our High Priest has entered the heavenly Sanctuary is mystically separated from His Sacred Body, not actually or literally so.

But, further, our Lord appears in Heaven before the Father not only as the Lamb once slain for us, but also as the Son of Man. S. Stephen, looking up stedfastly into heaven, saw the *Son of Man* standing at the right hand of God,<sup>2</sup> and the beloved disciple, in his vision of the Lord in glory, saw Him in the midst of the golden candlesticks as *one like unto a son of man*.<sup>3</sup> In Christ two whole and perfect natures, the Godhead and the Manhood, were joined together in One Person never to be divided,<sup>4</sup> so that at the Resurrection He took again His Body and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended into Heaven.<sup>5</sup> Thus our Lord appears before the Eternal Father as our Representative; as the Second Adam, the Representative of regenerate and restored humanity, the Head of the Church, to Whom His members are vitally united. Clothed in our flesh at the right hand of the

<sup>1</sup> Rev. v. 6.<sup>2</sup> Acts vii. 55, 56.<sup>3</sup> Rev. i. 12, 13.<sup>4</sup> Art. ii.<sup>5</sup> Art. iv.

Majesty on high, "He seeth us daily in Himself, He cannot look upon His flesh, but He must think upon us."<sup>1</sup> As He presents Himself before the Father His Offering, accordingly, is not merely that of Himself, but Himself with His whole Church united to Him and gathered up in Him. The Mediation of our High-Priest is twofold; it is the presentation of a past Death inasmuch as He is the Lamb as it had been slain, and it is also the presentation of all the energies of a present Life, which includes the life of His people, who sit in heavenly places with Him<sup>2</sup> because they are in Him as members of His Body.

We have seen that in the Eucharist the Church does on earth what Christ does above. Accordingly we first present Him to the Father as the Lamb of God, the abiding Propitiation for the daily sins of men, and then we present Him also as the Head of the Body, and with Him we present His whole Church and ourselves severally as His members. We cannot approach God without Him; it is only in reliance upon His merits that we have boldness to come before the Throne of Grace.<sup>3</sup>

"Between our sins and their reward  
We set the Passion of Thy Son our Lord."

We first interpose His merits between our sinful souls and the just judgment of God, praying that God will "accept our Eucharistic Sacrifice, and that by the merits and death of His Son and through faith in His Blood, we and all the whole Church may obtain remission of our sins and all other benefits of His Passion."<sup>4</sup> But in thus presenting Christ, because of our union with Him we also present ourselves; as we cannot approach without Him, so neither can He without us; therefore in the same Prayer of Oblation at the Eucharist we at once go on to say,

<sup>1</sup> Bishop ANDREWES, *Sermons*, vol. i. vi. p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. iv. 16.

<sup>4</sup> From the Prayer of Oblation in the Communion Service, originally (and properly) forming part of the Canon, or Consecration Prayer.



"Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee." In the words of the hymn already quoted, while we pray—

"Look, Father, look on His Anointed Face,"

we at once add—

"Look on us as found in Him."<sup>1</sup>

This aspect of the Eucharistic Sacrifice as the Oblation in which the Church herself is offered is prominent in the writings of S. Augustine. "In the Sacrament of the Altar," he says, "it is shown to her that in the very Oblation which she offers she herself also is offered."<sup>2</sup> And again in another place he writes: "Christ is the Priest, He Himself the Offerer, He Himself the Oblation. And the Sacrament of this He willed to be in the daily Sacrifice of His Church, who, as she is the Body of Him who is her Head, learns to offer herself through Him."<sup>3</sup>

In considering the testimony of Scripture to the Eucharist as a Sacrificial memorial we must note both the remarkable occasion of its Institution and the significant words used by our Lord in instituting it.

The occasion of the Institution of the Eucharist was a Sacrificial time, viz. the celebration of the Sacrificial Feast of the Passover,<sup>4</sup> when our Lord either kept by anticipation the Jewish Feast, making it the occasion of the Institution of His Sacrament, or (if we accept another view which has been urged with much force)<sup>5</sup> substituted for the Jewish Feast, and enjoined upon His followers the observance of, a Passover rite of far more Divine significance belong-

<sup>1</sup> From a Eucharistic Hymn by Dr. William Bright.

<sup>2</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, x. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, x. 20.

<sup>4</sup> The Sacrificial character of the Passover is admitted on all hands, and it is called a Sacrifice in Scripture. See e.g. Deut. xvi. 2, 5, 6.

<sup>5</sup> See LUCKOCK, *Footprints of the Son of Man as traced by S. Mark*, vol. ii. pp. 185-7.

ing to the New Covenant. Both our Lord's directions for the preparation of the Last Supper, when He bade His Apostles say to the master of the house, "I keep the Passover ( $\piοιῶ τὸ πάσχα$ ) at thy house with My disciples,"<sup>1</sup> and His words during the Supper itself, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer,"<sup>2</sup> alike mark the occasion as Sacrificial. By the choice of such a time for the Institution of the Eucharistic commemoration of Himself and of His Death for man, and by His express reference to it as the Passover Sacrifice, Christ taught us the great conception of Himself as the Lamb offered for the sins of men, which S. Paul takes up and to which he gives expression in the well-known words, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."<sup>3</sup>

Further, the terms our Lord used in instituting the Sacrament, especially as considered in view of the Sacrificial time when they were uttered, mark the Eucharist as a Sacrificial action:—

(i) "*Do this*" ( $τοῦτο ποιεῖτε$ ). The word *this* taken in its most natural and obvious sense refers to the whole action in which the Lord and His Apostles were at the moment engaged, viz. the celebration of the Sacrificial feast of the Passover of the New Covenant. The command may, accordingly, be rightly rendered "Offer this," "Make this your sacrifice,"<sup>4</sup> for the Greek verb ( $ποιεῖν$ ) has, in the Hellenistic Greek of the Septuagint, this meaning when it occurs in a Sacrificial context,<sup>5</sup> and Justin Martyr, in referring

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xxvi. 18.

<sup>2</sup> S. Luke xxii. 15.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. v. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Some think that the sacrificial meaning of  $ποιεῖν$  is inadmissible. See T. K. ABBOTT, *Essays chiefly on the Original Texts of the Old and New Testaments*, pp. 110 *et. seqq.*; PLUMMER on S. Luke xxii. 19 in the *International Critical Commentary*; and MASON, *Faith of the Gospel*, p. 309. Abbott urges that  $ποιεῖν$  can only mean "offer" when in a Sacrificial context, but, as shown above, it has in the case of the Institution of the Eucharist a Sacrificial connexion, viz.  $ποιεῖν τὸ πάσχα$ , the very phrase used of the Last Supper by Christ Himself in S. Matt. xxvi. 18.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. Exod. x. 25; xxix. 38, 39; Lev. ix. 7; xvi. 24; and cf. in New Testament, Heb. xi. 28. A table of the Septuagint use of  $ποιεῖν$

to the words of Institution, understands the verb in this sense; "the meal offering," he says, "was a type of the Bread of the Eucharist, which Jesus Christ our Lord commanded us to offer (ποιεῖν) for a memorial of His Passion."<sup>1</sup>

(ii) "Do this in remembrance of Me"—for *My memorial* (εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν). The precise word of which our Lord here makes use is rather a rare one. In the only other place in the New Testament where it occurs it is used of the sacrifices of the great Day of Atonement.<sup>2</sup> In the Old Testament the word occurs twice.<sup>3</sup> In one case it refers to the blowing of trumpets, at the time of sacrificing burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, for a memorial before God,<sup>4</sup> and in the other case it is applied to the offering of frankincense with the shewbread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord.<sup>5</sup> Thus the word is, in Biblical language, restricted to the sense of a memorial made before God.<sup>6</sup> When our Lord, at such a time, used such a word, those who heard Him would naturally understand that He was appointing for their observance a memorial Sacrificial in character, not merely one by which they might remind themselves and others of His

with a Sacrificial meaning, generally corresponding to the Hebrew עֲשֵׂה, is given in the Appendix to the *Charge* of Bishop Hamilton, of Salisbury. See also LUCKOCK, *Divine Liturgy*, pp. 305, 306, and PRYNNE, *The Truth and Reality of the Eucharistic Sacrifice*, pp. 62 *et seq.*

<sup>1</sup> *Dialogue with Trypho*, cap. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. x. 3.

<sup>3</sup> We may disregard the occurrence in the titles of Psalms xxxviii. (LXX. xxxvii.) and lxx. (LXX. lxix.) as scarcely applicable to the present discussion, though it may be noted that the Psalms in question are confessions of sin addressed to God.

<sup>4</sup> Num. x. 10, where it stands for the Hebrew זָבָר.

<sup>5</sup> Lev. xxiv. 7, where it represents the Hebrew זָבָר.

<sup>6</sup> T. K. ABBOTT, who denies a sacrificial sense of ποιεῖν, and attempts to evacuate ἀνάμνησιν of any sacrificial meaning finds himself obliged to admit this. Of Num. x. 10 he writes: "the blowing (of trumpets) is regarded as a sort of reminder to the Almighty"; and of Lev. xxiv. 7 he says: "it was a reminder . . . viz. it brought the offering and the offerer to remembrance before God" (*Essays on the Original Texts of the Old and New Testaments*, p. 123).

Death,<sup>1</sup> but which they might present before God ; and if we are to be guided by Scriptural usage in ascertaining the exact meaning of *ἀνάμνησις*, we can scarcely avoid concluding that it marks out the Eucharist as a memorial before God in the sense in which the most solemn oblations and sacrificial ceremonies of the Old Covenant were memorials before Him.

This aspect of the Eucharist as a Sacrificial rite, which underlies the circumstances and the terminology of its Institution, is also implied in other passages in the New Testament.

(i) The clearest of these, and the one concerning which there can be the least uncertainty or controversy is 1 Corinthians x. 16-21 : "The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not a communion of the Body of Christ? Seeing that we who are many, are one Bread, one Body : for we all partake of the One Bread. Behold Israel after the flesh : have not they which eat the sacrifices communion with the altar? What say I then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything? Or that an idol is anything? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God : and I would not that ye should have communion with devils. Ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils : ye cannot partake of the Table of the Lord, and of the table of devils." A parallel is here drawn between the Christian Communion and partaking of Jewish sacrifices at the altar of the Old Covenant, and between eating at the Lord's Table and at the table of devils, *i.e.* partaking of meats which had been offered in sacrifice at heathen altars. The passage is a very important one, because its language shows that the associations of the Communion in the Eucharist were with the ancient Sacrificial system, and that, in S. Paul's view, the Eucharist occupies the place of Sacrifice in the Christian Dispensation. The point of his parallel lies in the principle that participation in Sacrifice offered is the means of Communion with the Deity worshipped, and if the Sacrificial

<sup>1</sup> PLUMMER on S. Luke xxii. 19, *International Critical Commentary*.

character of the Eucharist be denied the parallel altogether breaks down, for the Apostle's argument depends upon it. The Sacrificial reference of the passage is further illustrated and determined by the words which occur in the chapter following, where S. Paul indicates that the Sacrament is a continual proclamation of our association with Christ, as partakers of His Body and Blood, in His Sacrificial work, "For as often," he writes, "as ye eat this Bread, and drink the Cup, ye proclaim the Lord's Death till He come."<sup>1</sup>

(ii) The next passage we have to consider is Romans xv. 15, 16: "I write the more boldly unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of the grace that was given to me of God, that I should be a *priest*<sup>2</sup> of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, being the *sacrificing priest*<sup>3</sup> of the Gospel of God, that *the offering up* of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." The Apostle is here making some apology for his admonitions, and says that in writing thus boldly to the Romans he is only fulfilling his duty as Apostle of the Gentiles, the priest who stands at the Altar ministering in Sacrifice,<sup>4</sup> and presenting to God as an offering the Gentile churches. In speaking of the grace of God, he uses words which plainly imply the exercise of priestly functions, and we can scarcely doubt that the thought of the Oblation of the Church in the Eucharist<sup>5</sup> underlies S. Paul's language; in that case it does not appear likely that he would have used such language, or adopted such imagery, unless in his conception the Eucharist was a Sacrifice and the ministers of the Gospel were priests.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 26.

<sup>2</sup> SANDAY and HEADLAM (*International Critical Commentary*) note that *λειτουργόν* here "seems to be used definitely and technically, as in the Septuagint, of a priest." Cf. 2 Esdras xx. 36 (Neh. x. 37), and Heb. viii. 2 used of our Lord, who is *ἀρχιερεὺς* and *τῶν ἁγίων λειτουργός*.

<sup>3</sup> *ιερουργούντα*. Thus rendered by SANDAY and HEADLAM.

<sup>4</sup> See the margin of the Revised Version.

<sup>5</sup> See above, pp. 233-4.

(iii) One more famous passage remains to be noted, Hebrews xiii. 10. The author has in mind the difficulty felt by Hebrew Christians, in that they were cut off from their ancestral worship and precluded from participation in the Divinely appointed Sacrifices of the Law, and in this passage he shows them that, in this respect, it is not ill with them but with those who remain in the Old Dispensation, that not Christians but Jews are in fact the excommunicated party, for "we have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat who serve the Tabernacle." The writer's main contention is that the exclusion of Christians from the Sacrificial services of the Temple is compensated, and more than compensated, by something which answers to them, and is of a nobler kind.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Christian Altar of which he speaks must correspond to the altar in the Temple as including both the offering of Sacrifice and the feeding upon the Sacrifice offered. Primarily, it is urged, the reference is to Christ, to His Sacrifice on the Altar of the Cross, and to our participation in that Sacrifice. This is no doubt true, but then, surely, the reference practically is to the Representation of that Sacrifice at the Altar of the Christian Church, where that Atoning Death is visibly set forth,<sup>2</sup> and where Christ truly gives Himself, as Sacrificed, to be the Food of His people.<sup>3</sup> "The author evidently has in mind the Holy Supper, the meal of spiritual life-fellowship and union with the Saviour."<sup>4</sup>

The Primitive Liturgies afford unmistakable evidence of the belief of the early Church as to the Eucharist. Though these, in their extant form, were not composed by the Apostles and Fathers whose names they bear, yet we may very well suppose that they are the legitimate development of their unwritten traditions as to the Liturgy or form of service and manner of celebrating the Sacrament. In these early Liturgies there is, in certain important parts of the service, a close verbal agreement, and besides this verbal correspondence

<sup>1</sup> See WESTCOTT on Heb. xiii. 10, p. 437.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 26.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16.

<sup>4</sup> OLSHAUSEN on Heb. xiii. 10, p. 372.



which appears in certain parts the general tenor of the Liturgies presents a very remarkable agreement throughout, the Eucharistic Service being made up of the same constituent parts, though these are not always arranged in the same order, and the same great conceptions with respect to the Sacrament characterising them all, though these may be expressed in somewhat varying phraseology. Those portions in which the Liturgies thus agree, in sense if not in words, must certainly date from a period considerably earlier than that to which the extant Liturgies themselves in their present form belong, and presumably have Apostolic authority, for that the Apostles gave instructions bearing on the celebration and reception of the Eucharist in the Churches which they founded is clearly proved by incidental allusion in the New Testament. S Paul, for example, when he finds it necessary to treat of the Eucharist in writing to the Corinthians reminds them of the instruction he had given them on the Sacrament when he preached the Gospel to them, saying, "I received of the Lord that which *I also delivered unto you.*"<sup>1</sup> The following important features are common to all ancient Liturgies without exception, and, therefore, as we should naturally conclude, belong to the common original, and presumably form part of the Apostolic παραθήκη :—

- (1) Lections from Scripture.
- (2) The recital of the words of Institution.
- (3) Prayer for the consecration of the Elements.
- (4) The Oblation of the Elements.
- (5) Intercessions for the living and the dead.
- (6) The Lord's Prayer.
- (7) The Communion.

The fourth of these elements in the Service constituted the Memorial, presented to the Father, of the Sacrifice of Christ, and this solemn offering of the Elements as a Memorial before God, before their consumption by the Communicants, is the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 23.

Sacrificial element of the Sacrament. The very distinct testimony to the Sacrificial character of the Eucharist which marks the general tenor of the Liturgies may be illustrated by one or two quotations.

(a) From the *Clementine Liturgy*<sup>1</sup>.—

“Wherefore, having in remembrance His Passion and Death and Resurrection from the dead, and His return again into Heaven, and His second future coming, when He shall come with glory and power to judge the quick and the dead, and to render to every man according to his works—we offer (προσφέρομεν) unto Thee, our King and God, according to His appointment, this Bread and this Cup, giving thanks unto Thee through Him, that Thou hast thought us worthy to stand before Thee, and to offer Sacrifice (ἱερατεύειν) unto Thee.”

(b) From the *Liturgy of S. James*<sup>2</sup>.—

“Therefore we sinners, also, having in remembrance His life-giving Passion, His saving Cross, His Death and Resurrection from the dead on the third day, His Ascension into Heaven, and Session at the right hand of Thee, His God and Father, and His glorious and terrible second coming, when He shall come with glory to judge the quick and the dead, when He shall render to every man according to his works—offer (προσφέρομεν) unto Thee, O Lord, this tremendous and unbloody Sacrifice (τὴν φοβερὰν ταύτην καὶ ἀναίμακτον θυσίαν), beseeching . . .”

There are very few subjects on which the testimony of the ancient Fathers is more express and clear than on this of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Two things in particular may be mentioned in which there is quite a general agreement amongst early Christian writers, and which accordingly afford striking evidence as to the conception of the Sacrament prevalent in the Primitive Church.

<sup>1</sup> Embodied in the *Apostolical Constitutions* and dating, perhaps, from the middle of the third century.

<sup>2</sup> Dating from the earlier part of the fourth century and in general use throughout the Patriarchate of Antioch.

(i) The first of these is the regular use of the word *Altar* (*θυσιαστήριον*) to designate that on which the Eucharist is offered. As an example of this we may refer to the usage of S. Ignatius of Antioch, the disciple of the Apostle S. John, who in his Epistles has no other name than "Altar" for the Lord's Table. Thus he writes to the Philadelphians: "Take heed to have but one Eucharist, for there is one Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one Cup for the unity of His Blood, one *Altar*, as there is one Bishop, along with the presbytery and deacons, my fellow-servants."<sup>1</sup> If our explanation given above be accepted,<sup>2</sup> Hebrews xiii. 10 furnishes the earliest extant example of the term Altar in a Eucharistic context.

(ii) Another striking feature of early Christian literature in general in this connexion is the constant reference to Malachi i. 11 as a prophecy of the Eucharistic Oblation: "In every place incense shall be offered unto My Name, and a pure Offering, for My Name shall be great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts." This text from Malachi was, says Mede, "in the oldest and purest time of the Church a text of eminent note, and familiarly known to every Christian, being alleged by their pastors and teachers as an express and undoubted prophecy of the Christian Sacrifice, or solemn worship in the Eucharist, taught by our blessed Saviour unto His disciples, to be observed of all that shall believe in His Name; and this so generally and grantedly, as could never have been, at least so early, unless they had learned thus to apply it by tradition from the Apostles."<sup>3</sup> Some typical examples of this reference to Malachi are here appended:—

(a) From *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*<sup>4</sup>:—

"On the Lord's Day do ye assemble and break bread and give thanks (*εὐχαριστήσατε*), after confessing your transgressions, in order that your sacrifice (*θυσία*) may be pure. But every-

<sup>1</sup> *Epistle to the Philadelphians*, cap. iv. ; cf. also *Ephesians* v. and *Trallians* vii.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 239.

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Sacrifice*, p. 355.

<sup>4</sup> Cap. xiv. This book is thought to date from the close of the first century.

one that hath a controversy with his friend, let him not come together with you until they be reconciled, that your Sacrifice may not be profaned. For this is that which was spoken by the Lord : At every place and time, bring Me a pure Sacrifice ; for a great King am I, and My Name is marvellous among the nations."

(b) From Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, cap. 41 :—

"From the rising unto the setting of the sun My Name is glorified among the Gentiles, and in every place incense is offered unto My Name and a pure Sacrifice, for great is My Name among the Gentiles, saith the Lord, but ye profane it. He at that time foretells the sacrifices offered to Him in every place by us Gentiles, that is the Bread of the Eucharist and the Cup likewise of the Eucharist, saying that we (Gentile Christians) glorify His Name, but that ye (Jews) profane it."

Having noted these features of general agreement it will be sufficient, in addition, to illustrate the prevailing habit of thought in the Primitive Church on this subject by a few representative quotations.

(a) From *Irenæus* :—

"Therefore the Oblation of the Church, which the Lord taught should be offered in the whole world, is accounted by God a pure Sacrifice, and is acceptable to Him.<sup>1</sup>

(b) From *S. Cyprian* :—

"For if Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, is Himself the chief Priest of God the Father, and has first offered Himself a Sacrifice to the Father, and has commanded this to be done for a Memorial of Himself, certainly that priest truly discharges the Office of Christ who imitates that which Christ did ; and he then offers a true and full Sacrifice in the Church to God the Father if he so proceeds to offer it according as he sees that Christ Himself offered." ■

(c) From *S. Cyril of Jerusalem* :—

"Then, having sanctified ourselves by these spiritual hymns,

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Hæc.* IV. xviii.

■ *Epistle* lxiii., ed. Goldhorn.

we call upon God, the lover of men, to send forth the Holy Spirit upon the gifts lying before Him that He may make the Bread the Body of Christ and the Wine the Blood of Christ. . . . Then, after the spiritual Sacrifice, the bloodless worship, is completed, we beseech God upon that Sacrifice of Propitiation for the common peace of the Churches . . . and generally for all in need of succour we all pray and offer this Sacrifice.”<sup>1</sup>

(d) From *S. Augustine* :—

“This Sacrifice succeeded all those sacrifices of the Old Testament, which were immolated also as a shadow of that to come . . . Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a Body hast Thou prepared Me ;<sup>2</sup> because in place of all those sacrifices and oblations His Body is offered, and is ministered to the Communicants.”<sup>3</sup>

During the keen controversy on the Sacrament which raged in Western Christendom in the sixteenth century there was some confusion on the subject of the Eucharist as a Sacrifice. In the later period of the Middle Ages it was popularly held and taught that the Sacrifice of Christ was reiterated or supplemented in every Mass, or that, while Christ once for all made satisfaction for original sin, it was necessary that Masses should be offered by way of additional propitiation for actual sins daily committed” ;<sup>4</sup> hence the growth of the system of private Masses with its attendant abuses.<sup>5</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on the Mysteries*, v. 7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Alluding to Ps. xl. 6, the old Latin Version with which S. Augustine was familiar agreeing here, as is very frequently the case, with the Septuagint rather than with the Hebrew original.

<sup>3</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, xvii. 20.

<sup>4</sup> This doctrine finds expression in the writings of the famous Schoolman Albertus Magnus (d. 1280), by whom, apparently, it was first definitely taught. See e.g. *Sermo I De Sacramento Eucharistia*, *Opera* xii. p. 250. “The second reason for the institution of this Sacrament is . . . that as the Body of our Lord was once offered for Original Sin, so It might be offered continually on the Altar for our daily offences.” See DENNY and LACEY, *De Hierarchia Anglicana*, p. 128.

<sup>5</sup> See *Augsburg Confession*, Part II. Art. iii.

current teaching on this point<sup>1</sup> led in some quarters, and especially amongst those influenced by Zwingli and Calvin,<sup>2</sup> to a reactionary denial of any Sacrificial aspect of the Sacrament and a refusal to recognise it as in any sense a memorial before God of the merits and Passion of Christ.<sup>3</sup> Our English Reformers on the whole,<sup>4</sup> taking their stand, as they did, on the pattern of the Primitive Church and the writings of the early Fathers, remained faithful to the Catholic position as exhibited in the representative quotations we have already cited. At the same time, because of the false conceptions current and connected with the "sacrifices of Masses,"<sup>5</sup> it was thought necessary for those times by the Reformers to emphasise the Communion aspect of the Eucharist, for the false notions prevalent had tended very much to obscure the great end of Christ's Institution, and it had come about that the bulk of the people communicated very rarely. Accordingly, in the English Prayer Book the Liturgy was entitled "The Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, or *Holy*

<sup>1</sup> Referred to and condemned in our Art. xxxi.

<sup>2</sup> Thus Calvin writes (*Institutes*, IV. xviii. 11): "I perceive that those ancient writers also wrested this memorial to a use inconsistent with the Lord's institution . . . I think they cannot be acquitted of having committed some error in practice, for they imitated the Jewish manner of sacrificing more nearly than either Christ had commanded or the nature of the Gospel admitted." In these words he definitely sets aside the Primitive teaching as erroneous.

<sup>3</sup> This is apparent from the significant treatment which the Eucharistic Office received at Calvin's hands. Disregarding all Liturgical precedent, according to which the recital of the Institution occurs in the course of a prayer addressed to God, so that the Memorial is made before Him, the Swiss Reformer directed as follows: After Prayer and the Confession of Faith, to testify in the name of the people that all wish to live and die in the doctrine of Christ, he says aloud, "Let us listen to the Institution of the Holy Supper by Jesus Christ, as narrated by S. Paul in the eleventh chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians." See "The Manner of Celebrating the Lord's Supper," *Calvin's Tracts*, vol. ii. p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> Hooper is an exception, and Cranmer a partial one, for his views on the Eucharist, at one time Lutheran, became Zwinglian or Calvinistic. See *The Thirty-nine Articles and the Age of the Reformation*, Appendix iii.

<sup>5</sup> See Art. xxxi.



*Communion*," and, from 1552 onwards, the name "Holy Table," or "the Lord's Table," was consistently used for the Altar because of the association of this last in the popular mind with the abuse of the Sacrificial significance of the Sacrament which the Reformers wished to repudiate. We are not to suppose, however, that in adopting such terminology our Reformers intended thereby to deny any Sacrificial significance to the Sacrament, for it is abundantly evident that the Communion which it was their desire to emphasise and restore to its due prominence was, in their view, a Feast upon a Sacrifice.<sup>1</sup> That leading English Reformers held fast to the conception of the Sacrament, so prominent in the Primitive Liturgies and early Christian writings, as a pleading before God, in a mystery, of the all-sufficient Sacrifice once offered may be gathered from their writings and from statements made by some of them in the face of death. In illustration of this we may refer particularly to the belief of Bishop Ridley. His case is the more important because, owing to his zeal in issuing injunctions<sup>2</sup> for the removal of stone Altars and the substitution of movable Tables, he is not unfrequently referred to as an opponent of the Sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist. From several passages in his Works, however, it would appear that no one at that time held more strongly to the Primitive doctrine as to the Eucharistic Sacrifice than he. In his disputation at Oxford against Dr. Smith,<sup>3</sup> arguing against the idea of repetition he forcibly upheld the Primitive view in these words: "as though our unbloody Sacrifice of the Church were any other than the Sacrifice of praise and

<sup>1</sup> See the first of Ridley's *Reasons why the Lord's Board should rather be after the form of a Table, than of an Altar*. "When we come to the Lord's Board, what do we come for? To sacrifice Christ again and to crucify Him again, or to feed upon Him that was once only crucified and offered up for us? If we come to feed upon Him, spiritually to eat His Body and spiritually to drink His Blood (which is the true use of the Lord's Supper), then no man can deny but the form of a Table is more meet for the Lord's Board, than the form of an Altar." *Ridley's Works*, p. 322.

<sup>2</sup> Enforced by an Order of Council November 24th, 1550.

<sup>3</sup> Held April 17th, 1555.

thanksgiving, than a commemoration, a showing forth and a sacramental representation of that one only bloody Sacrifice, offered up once for all.”<sup>1</sup> Again, during the same disputation, with reference to the words of S. Chrysostom cited by Dr. Weston, “One body and one Christ is there,” Ridley replied, “I say that both Christ and the Sacrifice of Christ are there; Christ by His Spirit, grace and verity; the Sacrifice by signification. Thus I grant, with Chrysostom, that there is one Host or Sacrifice, and not many. And this our Host is called one, by reason of the unity of that one, which one only all our Hosts do represent.”<sup>2</sup> Further, at a later stage in the disputation, when expressly asked, “What say you to that council, where it is said that the priest doth offer an unbloody Sacrifice of the Body of Christ?” Ridley affirmed, “I say it is well said, if it be rightly understood . . . it is called unbloody, and is offered after a certain manner, and in a mystery, and a representation of that bloody Sacrifice; and he doth not lie who saith Christ to be offered.”<sup>3</sup>

But more important than the views of individual Reformers are the general result of their labours and the principles embodied in the Formularies and Liturgy of the Anglican Church, and it is very remarkable that, though some prominent divines of the period sympathised, as regards Sacramental doctrine, with Geneva, the distinctive theology of the Swiss Reformers finds no expression in authoritative Anglican Formularies. Thus the Communion Service of our Church is framed altogether, though since 1552 with some variations in arrangement, upon the ancient Liturgical model, uses the traditional language and embodies the conceptions of the Sacrament which have been prominent and general in the Church as a whole from Primitive times. This being the case, our Communion Office testifies, as we should expect, to the Sacrificial character of the Sacrament, alike in its structure, in passages from the old Liturgy retained in it and

<sup>1</sup> *Ridley's Works*, ed. Parker Society, pp. 210, 211.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 216, 217.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 250.

by directions as to the ritual or manner of the celebration. An example may be given under each of these three heads :—

(i) In the Consecration Prayer the priest recites how that Christ “did institute, and in His Holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual Memory of that His precious Death, until His coming again.” The Memorial here referred to is solemnly made immediately afterwards, when the priest repeats Christ’s own words of Institution and performs the very actions of Christ, in the course of the same Prayer. The fact that the Memorial thus occurs in the course of a Prayer addressed to the Father (as in all ancient Liturgies) shows that it is made *before God* in the name of the congregation assembled, and it is very significant that those who have refused to acknowledge a Sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist have forsaken Catholic precedent and provided for the commemoration *in the course of an address to the congregation*, thereby indicating that the Sacrament in their view is only a memorial in the sense of being a reminder to the people of what Christ has done for them.

(ii) The Sacrificial conception underlies the Prayer of Oblation, which corresponds to part of the Canon of the Mass in the older service-books: “O Lord and heavenly Father, we Thy humble servants entirely desire Thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving (*i.e. Eucharistic Sacrifice*), most humbly beseeching Thee to grant that, by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His Blood, we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His Passion.” In maintaining that the Church of England holds and teaches the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice the Archbishops of Canterbury and York recently referred to this prayer in the following terms: “We truly teach the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice and do not believe it to be a nude commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Cross. . . . We continue a perpetual Memory of the precious death of Christ, Who is our Advocate with the Father and the Propitiation for our sins, according to His precept,

until His coming again. For first we offer the Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving: *then next we plead and represent before the Father the Sacrifice of the Cross, and by it we confidently entreat remission of sins and all other benefits of the Lord's Passion for all the whole Church*: and lastly we offer the Sacrifice of ourselves to the Creator of all things which we have already signified by the oblations of His creatures. This whole action, in which the people has necessarily to take its part with the Priest, we are accustomed to call *the Eucharistic Sacrifice*.”<sup>1</sup>

(iii) In illustration of the conception of the Sacrament embodied in the Anglican Office we may refer not only to its structure, which followed time-honoured lines, and its language derived from ancient sources, but also to the *Ornaments Rubric* as introduced at the Elizabethan revision, by which it was provided that the vestments of the Minister should be such “as were in this Church of England by the authority of Parliament, in the second year of King Edward the Sixth.” The use of these vestments was at the time distinctly understood to imply a recognition of the Sacrificial character of the Sacrament.<sup>2</sup>

The faith of the Church being that the earthly Oblation in the Eucharist is one with the heavenly Oblation of the Lord Himself, Christians felt that in this service of His own appoint-

<sup>1</sup> From the *Answer of the Archbishops of England to the Apostolic Letter of Pope Leo XIII. on English Ordinations*, English translation, pp. 18, 19.

<sup>2</sup> See the comments of GEORGE WITHERS on the Prayer Book of 1559. “The High Parliament of the whole realm was assembled, popery again cast out, and the second form of prayers, which Edward left behind him at his death, was restored to the Church. But the ceremonies which, as was above stated, were retained in the Church at the first reformation of Edward are restored under the same name. . . . In what way the Sacraments are disfigured by human inventions will easily appear from the public form of prayer, the royal injunctions, and the admonitions, or (as they call them) the advertisements of the bishops. . . . What must we say when most of them (*i.e.* the English clergy) are popish priests, consecrated to perform mass?”—*Zurich Letters*, vol. ii. pp. 161-3.

ment they could ever rely on the present co-operation of Him Who "liveth to make intercession," and the Eucharist naturally took its place as the Church's great service of intercession, in which the members on earth believed that their own supplications, feeble and imperfect as they were, were joined to the all-prevailing Mediation of the great High Priest before the Throne. A prominent feature of the service, accordingly, from the earliest times has been the offering up, in connexion with the Eucharistic Oblation, of prayers and intercessions for all estates of men, for those outside the Church as well as for its members, for those absent as for those present, for those brethren in the waiting state beyond the grave who have gone before with the sign of faith as for those still bearing their part in the warfare of the Church on earth. Such intercessions and commemorations both of the living and the departed are found in all the Liturgies of the Primitive Church, and as an excellent description of their character in general we cannot do better than quote the words of S. Cyril of Jerusalem: "After the spiritual Sacrifice, the unbloody worship is completed, we beseech God upon that Sacrifice of Propitiation for the common peace of the Churches, for the good order of the world, for kings, for our soldiers and allies, for the sick, for the afflicted, and generally for all who are in need of succour we all pray and offer this Sacrifice. Then we make mention too of those who have fallen asleep before us, first of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, that God would at their prayers and intercessions receive our supplication; then also on behalf of our holy fathers and bishops who have fallen asleep, and, in short, of all amongst us who have fallen asleep before us, believing that it will be the greatest benefit to the souls on whose behalf our supplication is offered while the holy and most awful Sacrifice is lying before us."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on the Mysteries*, v. 8, 9. Tertullian also plainly testifies to the custom of offering intercessions for the dead at the Eucharist. To mention one passage only, he says, in *De Corona*, cap. iii., "We offer oblations for the dead on the anniversary of their birth." S. Cyprian and

Thus from the earliest ages the Church made supplication at the Altar for the quick and the dead whenever she pleaded the merits of their one Redeemer. When the Eucharistic Oblation is made, not merely for ourselves, nor for the Church in our own country, nor only for the Church on earth, but for *all the whole Church* do we supplicate the benefits of Christ's Passion, so that all the members of the one Communion, whether militant here in earth, or in the waiting world beyond the veil, are united in the High Priestly intercession of Christ the Head.

“Ye Saints of God, sweet Jesu's Body glorious,  
From righteous Abel to the babe baptized but now,  
Ye that in Paradise take rest victorious,  
Ye that on earth beneath the Cross still bow,  
Ye lightning-visaged hosts Angelical,  
Here, at His holy feet, I meet you all.”

It may be here further briefly indicated how the Eucharist is thus the bond of the Communion of Saints living and departed.

(i) Because it is the *Commemoration and the pleading of the Sacrifice of Christ*. It has been already shown how we, the members of the one Communion on earth, in this service plead the merits of Christ's Sacrifice, how we ask God to “look on us as found in Him,” and “between our sins and their reward we set the Passion of His Son our Lord.” But the Saints in Paradise ever commemorate the same Sacrifice. In the glimpses of their activity which are given us in Scripture they are pictured as engaged in worship of “the Lamb as it had been slain.” As priests unto God redeemed by His Blood they hymn before the Throne His Sacrifice: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.” The commemoration of Christ's Sacrifice is therefore one great link between ourselves and the Saints in Paradise.

Origen also give express testimony to the custom of offering the Eucharist on behalf of the dead. See WARREN, *Liturgy and Ritual of the Ante-Nicene Church*, pp. 146-8.



(ii) As the *Communion of the Body and the Blood of Christ*<sup>1</sup> the Eucharist is the great bond of our union here on earth; having in the Sacrament each one of us Communion with Christ, we are thereby joined in close Communion with one another, we, though many, are one Bread, one Body: for we all partake of the one Bread.<sup>2</sup> But the same Living Bread is the sustenance of the whole Body; the spiritual nature of the Saints in Paradise requires spiritual food for its sustenance, and it is written, "The Lamb shall feed them."<sup>3</sup> In this our Communion service, accordingly, we draw our spiritual sustenance from the same source as they.

(iii) In the Eucharist *we are brought near to the very Presence of Christ*. The Saints in Paradise are in the shadow of the Throne. At the earthly Altar we too gather at His Feet, for the Lamb Who sitteth on the Throne is present at our Altar and spreads His tabernacle over us as over them.

Thus in this Sacrament are we joined in the same action with the Saints at rest, and share the grace and blessing which they enjoy in the near presence of the Lord. That confident reliance on the merits of Christ's Sacrifice to set us faultless before the Throne, that never-failing sustenance and strength drawn from the Lamb once slain, that sure protection in His near Presence; all these, mentioned by S. John in his Revelation as marks of the life of the blessed Saints in Paradise—all these are ours in our Eucharist to-day.

It has been shown that the Eucharist is a Commemoration of the Sacrifice of Christ. We have now to notice that it is also a Feast upon the same Sacrifice, whereby we have Communion with Him Whom we worship. Our Lord ordained the Sacrament not only for the continual Memorial of the Sacrifice of His death,<sup>4</sup> but that thereby He might feed the souls of His people with His Body and Blood. This latter aspect of the Sacrament as a Sacrificial Feast is of the highest importance, and has received in the Anglican Church that

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. vii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. x. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Church Catechism*.

emphasis which is due, being expressed in the title "Holy Communion" prefixed to the Order for the administration of the Sacrament, which name is naturally on that account the one in most general use among us.<sup>1</sup> The vital importance of this aspect of the Eucharist as the Communion rests on the principle that sustenance is necessary to every form of life, so that spiritual food is necessary to the new life begun in Baptism, as material food is necessary for the preservation of the natural life of the body. In the great discourse at Capernaum, as recorded by S. John, our Lord sets forth Himself as the Living Bread,<sup>2</sup> communicating to men the fulness of life which He Himself possesses: "as the Living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me."<sup>3</sup> Then Christ further explains that this "living by Him" is to be through appropriation of His life as sacrificed. "The Bread that I will give is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world . . . for My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My

<sup>1</sup> The name "Communion" properly denotes the act of participating, and in this sense only it was used with reference to the Sacrament in early times; but in post-Reformation times it has been largely used to designate the whole Office. *Eucharist* was the usual name for the Sacrament in the Primitive Church. It is so used, *e.g.* in the Didache, in the letters of S. Ignatius, and by Justin Martyr, and perhaps occurs in this sense in the New Testament (see 1 Cor. xiv. 16; 1 Tim. ii. 1), though from Scripture we should gather that the earliest name of the Sacrament was "*The Breaking of Bread*" (Acts ii. 42; xx. 7). It is doubtful whether the title *Lord's Supper*, which came into use in the sixteenth century, and was adopted by our Edwardian divines from the terminology of Continental Reformers, should be applied to the Sacrament apart from the Love-Feast. *Liturgy* is properly a general term, commonly used in the Eastern Church with special reference to the Eucharistic Office. *Mass*, though a word with no doctrinal significance, has unfortunately, since its retention by the Church of Rome, to the practical exclusion of other titles, association in the popular mind with distinctively Roman doctrine. The name *Eucharist* has been used in this book as certainly Primitive, possibly Scriptural, and as sanctioned by the Anglican Church (see Art. xxviii., Latin version). On the titles of the Sacrament see further *The Thirty-nine Articles and the Age of the Reformation*, pp. 219-22.

<sup>2</sup> S. John vi. 51.

<sup>3</sup> S. John vi. 57.

Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him.”<sup>1</sup> Moreover He expressly makes participation of His Flesh and Blood a necessary condition of spiritual life. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you.”<sup>2</sup> Later, on the night of His betrayal, our Lord referred back to, and by His action explained, this mysterious language, instituting and commending to the observance of His disciples the means of participation of His Flesh and Blood, made available for food by Sacrifice, for He took Bread, “and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is My Body, which is for you . . . after the same manner also He took the Cup, saying, This Cup is the New Testament in My Blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.”<sup>3</sup> S. Paul, who thus records the institution,<sup>4</sup> explains in another passage of the same Epistle to the Corinthians, the spiritual significance of the reception of the Sacramental signs ordained by Christ: “the Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not a Communion of the Body of Christ?”<sup>5</sup> The inward part, or thing signified by the outward signs of Bread and Wine, is the Body and the Blood of Christ which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper.<sup>6</sup> Nothing short of this Divine Food can really satisfy the spiritual nature of man, whose soul yearns after God. If the Holy Eucharist were nothing more than the feeding upon bread and wine with devout thoughts about Christ in the heart, it would in no wise supply the need

<sup>1</sup> S. John vi. 55, 56.    <sup>2</sup> S. John vi. 53.    <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25.

<sup>4</sup> It should be remembered that S. Paul’s account as given to the Corinthians was that which he had received on becoming a Christian, the traditional account of the Apostolic circle; so that earlier evidence than this as to the significance of the Eucharist is practically impossible.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16.

<sup>6</sup> *Church Catechism*, cf. *Homily for Good Friday, Part I.* p. 445 (ed. S.P.C.K.): “We shall be hereby the more ready to receive our Saviour and Maker in His Blessed Sacrament, to our everlasting comfort and health of soul.”

of our souls, so that the spiritual benefit consequent upon a worthy reception of the Sacrament cannot be regarded as simply the result of the soul's action upon itself, or such as might naturally follow upon devout meditation on Christ's death and the benefits which we receive thereby. The gift conveyed through the Sacrament is a far higher one, for Christ has promised to impart to us in His Ordinance the gift of Himself, the Living Bread from Heaven, that He may dwell in us and that we may live by Him, so that "we have a right to believe that, through this means of grace, we can have real communion with One outside ourselves, to Whose direct gift we owe the benefit which we receive."<sup>1</sup> Thus the consecrated elements are no bare symbols, and the grace of the Sacrament is not merely a subjective matter, but, on the other hand, there is an objective Presence and gift of Christ Himself to the faithful receiver. The true doctrine as to the grace of the Sacrament is well stated in one of our Homilies, which assures us that "thus much we must be sure to hold, that in the Supper of the Lord there is no vain ceremony, no bare sign, no untrue figure of a thing absent, but, as the Scripture saith, the Table of the Lord, the Bread and Cup of the Lord, the memory of Christ, the annunciation of His Death, yea the Communion of the Body and Blood of the Lord in a marvellous incorporation, which by the operation of the Holy Ghost, the very bond of our conjunction with Christ, is through faith wrought in the souls of the faithful."<sup>2</sup> In attempting to understand, so far as we may be able, this truth of our Communion with Christ we ought not to miss the significance of the fact that our Lord chose *food* as the Sacramental sign of our participation in Himself. There is nothing in the material world outside ourselves which is so close to us as the food which we eat, for it becomes part of ourselves by assimilation, is identified with us and we live by it. The outward sign of the Sacrament teaches us, therefore,

<sup>1</sup> SALMON, *Cathedral and University Sermons*, sermon xviii.

<sup>2</sup> *Homily of the Worthy Receiving, etc., of the Sacrament*, p. 476 (ed. S. P. C. K.).

by its very nature and properties, that the Communion we therein have with Christ is a partaking of Him in such a sense that, feeding upon His Sacred Body and Blood, we are identified with Him and live by His Life, we so eat the Flesh of Christ and drink His Blood that our sinful bodies are made clean by His Body, our souls washed in His precious Blood, and we evermore dwell in Him and He in us.<sup>1</sup> "We have Communion," writes S. Chrysostom, "not merely by having part or partaking, but by being made one with the things of which we partake."<sup>2</sup> So S. Ignatius, when interrogated by the Emperor Trajan, "Dost thou then carry Him Who was crucified within thee?"<sup>3</sup> could answer as a Christian living in Sacramental union with Christ, "I do, for it is written I will dwell in them, and walk in them,"<sup>4</sup> even as S. Paul before him had said, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."<sup>5</sup>

Our food in the Eucharist is thus the very Body and Blood of Christ Himself, in other words the communication of His whole living and glorified Humanity, and this precious gift is for the cleansing, sanctification, and salvation of our whole nature, body as well as soul. We should not, as we are sometimes apt to do, in speaking or treating of man's salvation, regard him as a being having only a soul to be saved, and leave the body out of account as though it were merely a temporary encumbrance, and the soul's envelopment in it an unfortunate entanglement. The Revelation of Christ has taught us the dignity and the eternal destiny of the body, no less than the worth of the spirit. His Incarnation, Resurrection, and Session in Heaven is the potential redemption and sanctification of the whole nature of man, material as well as spiritual; and the Blessed Sacrament, wherein we are made truly partakers of His glorified nature, does not merely

<sup>1</sup> Prayer of Humble Access in the *Communion Office*.

<sup>2</sup> On 1 Cor. x. 16, *Hom.* xxiv.

<sup>3</sup> In allusion to the name *Theophoros* ("one who bears God") by which the saint was wont to call himself.

<sup>4</sup> Referring to 2 Cor. vi. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Gal. ii. 20.

nourish the soul, leaving the body uncleansed to its natural state of corruption through sin, but it is the Divine Food of the whole man, that we may be sanctified wholly, and that our whole spirit, soul and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> The Communion of His Body and Blood effects a mutual indwelling of Christ and the soul ; as Christ lives for ever in our nature which He has taken, we too who feed on Him and abide in Him confidently look for the same glorious future for our own nature, body and soul. Our Lord Himself has taught us to believe this, for when He spoke of participation of His Flesh and Blood as the necessary condition of true life for man He evidently had regard to the whole nature of man. After saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you," He at once went on to add, "Whoso eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath eternal life ; and I will raise him up at the last day,"<sup>2</sup> indicating that participation in Himself, the Living Bread, means for us the present possession of eternal life as a Divine power, issuing in the preservation of our whole nature to a glorious resurrection and immortality. In Primitive times this tremendous signification of the Communion in the Eucharist was grasped and taught. In the thanksgiving after Communion embodied in the *Didache*, for example, occur these words : "We thank Thee, holy Father, for Thy Holy Name, which Thou hast caused to dwell in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which Thou hast made known unto us through Jesus Thy Servant . . . to us Thou hast graciously given spiritual food and drink and eternal life through Thy Servant."<sup>3</sup> Similarly S. Ignatius writes of the Eucharist as "the breaking of one Bread, which is the medicine of immortality, and the antidote that we should not die, but live for ever in Jesus Christ."<sup>4</sup> The teaching of the Church to-day, as embodied in our own

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. v. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Didache*, chap. x.

<sup>2</sup> S. John vi. 53, 54.

<sup>4</sup> *Epistle to the Ephesians*, xx.



Anglican formularies, is no less clear and express on the same point. As we approach the Altar to make our Communion we pray that we may so eat the Flesh of Christ and drink His Blood "that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood";<sup>1</sup> and one of the Homilies, from which we have before quoted, speaks of the grace of the Sacrament as "the Communion of the Body and Blood of the Lord . . . through faith wrought in the souls of the faithful, whereby not only their souls live to eternal life, but they surely trust to win to their bodies a resurrection to immortality."<sup>2</sup>

The custom of withholding participation in the Chalice from the laity began to creep into the Western Church in the eleventh century, and seems to have rapidly spread until the Council of Constance (1415) fixed Communion in one kind by defending it as a custom of the Church reasonably introduced, and by forbidding priests to give Communion in both kinds under penalty of excommunication. The practice was further defended by the Council of Trent,<sup>3</sup> and is retained by the Church of Rome at the present day, though we may be thankful that the abuse has ceased in our own portion of the Western Church, the Cup having been restored to the laity in England at the beginning of the reign of Edward VI.<sup>4</sup> The refusal of the Cup to communicants would seem to be clean contrary to Christ's ordinance, for His words at the Institution with reference to the Cup were, "Drink ye all of

<sup>1</sup> Prayer of Humble Access in the *Communion Office*.

<sup>2</sup> *Homily of the Worthy Receiving, etc., of the Sacrament*, p. 476.

<sup>3</sup> "The holy synod . . . declares and teaches that by no Divine precept are the laity, and clergy when not consecrating, bound to receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist in both kinds; neither can it by any means be doubted, without injury to Faith, that Communion in either one kind is sufficient for them unto salvation."—*Decrees of Council of Trent*, Session xxi. In the same Session it was also enacted: "If any one shall say that, by the precept of God, or by necessity of salvation, all and each one of the faithful of Christ ought to receive both kinds of the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist; let him be Anathema" (*Canon i.*).

<sup>4</sup> Viz. in the *Order of Communion*, 1548.

it,"<sup>1</sup> and S. Mark in his account adds, "and they all drank of it."<sup>2</sup> So too in another place, when enjoining participation of Himself as essential to life, our Lord pointedly mentioned the partaking of both elements, "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of man, *and drink His Blood*, ye have no life in you."<sup>3</sup> The practice of the Apostolic Church is sufficiently indicated by the incidental testimony of S. Paul, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils . . . as often as ye eat this Bread, *and drink this Cup*, ye do show the Lord's Death till He come."<sup>4</sup> We find, accordingly, that in early times such as attempted to practise Communion in one kind only were severely reprobated by the authorities of the Church. Leo the Great (A.D. 440), with reference to certain Manichees, writes: "They receive Christ's Body with unworthy mouth and entirely refuse to drink the Blood of our Redemption; therefore we give notice to you, holy brethren, that men of this sort, whose sacrilegious deceit has been detected, are to be expelled by priestly authority from the fellowship of the Saints."<sup>5</sup> Pope Gelasius was equally strong against the custom as practised by some in his day (A.D. 490), stigmatising the division of one and the same Mystery as "great sacrilege," and laying it down that those who for some superstitious reason abstained from the Chalice should "either receive the Sacrament in its entirety or be repelled from the entire Sacrament."<sup>6</sup> Two causes seem chiefly to have contributed to establish the custom of Communion in one kind in the Roman obedience in the Middle Ages, one of these practical, the other doctrinal. The practical cause was a desire to guard the Chalice from the

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xxvi. 27.

<sup>2</sup> S. Mark xiv. 23.

<sup>3</sup> S. John vi. 53.

<sup>4</sup> I Cor. x. 21; xi. 26. Cf. also the evidence of JUSTIN MARTYR's *Apology*, i. cap. 65: "they who amongst us are called deacons distribute to each one of those present to partake of the consecrated bread and of the wine mingled with water." At the Council of Constance it was freely conceded that "in the Primitive Church this Sacrament was received by the faithful in both kinds" (Session xiii.).

<sup>5</sup> *Hom.* xli.

<sup>6</sup> Letter to the bishops Majoricus and John, *Corp. Jur. Can. Decret.*, III. ii. 12.

danger of profanation or irreverence through accident, and the doctrinal argument used to support the custom was the theory of *Concomitance*, which was apparently connected in its origin with the growth of the belief in Transubstantiation. According to this theory it was held that our Lord's whole nature is so entirely and indivisibly present in either Element that all who partake of the consecrated Host receive therein both His Body and His Blood.<sup>1</sup> Of these reasons we have referred to, the practical one is surely insufficient, and the theoretical one too precarious, to warrant so important a change in the Sacrament as delivered by Christ<sup>2</sup> and administered in the Apostolic and Primitive Church. When Christ expressly bade His disciples receive in both kinds<sup>3</sup> it seems little less than presumption to treat either as superfluous. On the contrary, since our Lord enjoined the reception of both Elements, it is the part of loyal and faithful Christians thankfully to receive both, being assured that no part of His ordinance is without its effect and grace, and that therefore the partaking of the Chalice in the Sacrament has its own special significance. For the participation of the Blood of Christ as shed in Sacrifice to make Atonement for sin seems particularly to have reference to, and to meet, our need as sinners, so that participation in the consecrated Cup is for us participation in the

<sup>1</sup> This doctrine of Concomitance was distinctly asserted by the Council of Constance as well as by the later Council of Trent. "It is most firmly to be believed, and by no means to be doubted, that the whole Body and Blood of Christ is truly contained under the species of Bread as well as under the species of Wine."—*Council of Constance*, Session xiii.

<sup>2</sup> The Council of Trent in its decrees on the subject relied on the power of the Church, in dispensing the Sacraments, to change such things as might be deemed expedient, according to the variety of circumstances, times, and places. Such power of the Church we acknowledge, with the proviso that nothing be ordained against God's Word (see the *Thirty-nine Articles*, Arts. xx. and xxxiv.).

<sup>3</sup> It has been urged in defence of the Roman practice that it was to *priests only* (viz. the Apostles) that our Lord said "Drink ye all." The argument, however, scarcely applies, since the Church of Rome withholds the Cup from all present at the celebration of the Sacrament, priests and laymen alike, except only the consecrating priest.

Life<sup>1</sup> of Christ, as charged with all the virtue and healing power which flows from His atoning Sacrifice. This seems to follow as a natural inference from the terms in which our Lord spoke of the Cup at the Institution: "This is My Blood of the New Covenant which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins"<sup>2</sup>—the Blood of the Sacrifice ratifying the New Covenant<sup>3</sup> which restores sinful man to Communion with God—and it is with this same thought that He Himself taught us that we partake of the Chalice in our Eucharist: "The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, *which was shed for thee*, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life."<sup>4</sup> The Death of Christ is our remedy against sin and our salvation from it, yet not merely the physical dying of Christ considered as a single act external to ourselves and now long past, but as shared by ourselves. The New Testament conception of the Christian life is that it is a new life pleasing to God because it is a complete break with the sinful past, a mystical and Sacramental death with Christ so that the Christian dies to sin with Him. Our old man is crucified with Him that the body of sin might be destroyed;<sup>5</sup> and the Apostle can say, speaking in no bare metaphor but of a spiritual reality, "I am crucified with Christ."<sup>6</sup> As an abiding truth with saving power the Death of Christ is now present and we share it through the Sacraments of His appointment. Its power is first communicated to us at our Baptism, wherein we are buried with Christ into death,<sup>7</sup> and is received time after time, for we sinners need its continual application, in our Communion, and it is participation in the Chalice which is especially significant of this.

Externally, so far as our outward senses apprehend its obvious import, the Eucharist is a social action, a fraternal meal, and this lowest aspect of it is fraught with high significance. The act of eating together at the same table is, and

<sup>1</sup> "The blood is the life" (Gen. ix. 4).

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xxvi. 28; S. Mark xiv. 24; S. Luke xxii. 20.

<sup>3</sup> This is the significance of the expression *διαθήκη ἐν τῷ αἵματι μου*.

<sup>4</sup> The words of administration in the *Communion Office*.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. vi. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Gal. ii. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Rom. vi. 4.

ever has been, regarded all the world over as a pledge of fellowship and mutual good feeling between man and man, so that the outward form of the Sacrament as ordained by Christ, the eating of one Bread and the drinking of one Cup, of itself suggests the important teaching that those who partake are thereby pledged to fellowship and mutual goodwill. That our Lord in adopting a social meal as a Sacramental channel of grace intended that the outward form of the Sacrament should be an impressive indication of its inward power as the security of the mutual fellowship of His followers in Himself, is altogether in unison with, and may be legitimately inferred from, the context of the Institution; for on that same night before His Passion thoughts of the unity which should mark the company of His disciples and of the mutual love which they should exhibit were amongst the foremost in His mind, and the expression of these thoughts formed a large part both of prayer and discourse at the Last Supper, according to the account given by S. John.<sup>1</sup> It has been shown above that in the Eucharist as the Communion we partake of Christ so as to receive of His Life, and that not merely in a figure, but the blessing we receive in the Sacrament is a real spiritual gift from One outside ourselves; so also the Sacrament is more than a bare reminder by its outward signs of the love there ought to be amongst Christians and of the fellowship we ought to have with one another.<sup>2</sup> It is the gift of Christ to us in His ordinance that makes the fellowship; each member receives life and strength from the One Head, and partaking of this life in common the members are thereby knit together in one. Through being bound to Him we are members one of another. So it is that S. Paul follows up the thought of our Communion with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament with its sequel of our fellowship in One Body through the same: "The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not a Communion

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* S. John xv. 9-14, 17; xvii. 11, 21-3.

<sup>2</sup> "The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another."—Art. xxviii.

of the Body of Christ? Seeing that we, who are many, are one Bread, one Body: for we all partake of the One Bread."<sup>1</sup> The Eucharist may thus be said to be the means of the circulation of the Life of the Body through all the members, and has always been regarded as the great bond of unity,<sup>2</sup> the means of our preservation in the Christian Covenant,<sup>3</sup> and the Sacrament of membership in the Church of Christ.<sup>4</sup>

This is an aspect of the Eucharist prominent in the writings of S. Ignatius amongst early Christian documents. His letters abound with warnings against division, and he points his readers to the one Altar, with the observance of one Eucharist, as the pledge and security of their union as Christians: "Be ye, therefore, careful to observe one Eucharist, for there is one Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one Cup unto union in His Blood; there is one Altar . . . that whatsoever ye do, ye may do it after God."<sup>5</sup> This conception of the Eucharist as the Sacrament of membership in the Body of Christ is attested by the general consent of Christians in all ages, as is shown by the fact that in all parts of the Church throughout its history to *excommunicate* a person, *i.e.* to cut him off from participation in the Eucharist, has always been considered as equivalent to deprivation of the grace and blessing attached to membership in the Church and exclusion from the Christian brotherhood.

The efficacy of the Eucharist, considered in either of the two great aspects which have been treated, *i.e.* in its aspect as a Sacrifice and as a Communion alike, will be seen to depend

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> See above, chap. iv. p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> "He that is within the sanctuary is clean."—IGNATIUS, *Epistle to the Trallians*, vii.

<sup>4</sup> See the *Post-Communion Thanksgiving*: "Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank Thee, for that Thou dost vouchsafe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby . . . that we are very members incorporate in the mystical Body of Thy Son."

<sup>5</sup> IGNATIUS, *Epistle to the Philadelphians*, iv. Cf. *Ephesians*, xx.; *Magnesians*, vii.



on the truth of the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament. If the Sacrament is the efficacious pleading of the merits of Christ's Sacrifice, and not merely a reminder to us of what He has done for us by His Death, then His objective Presence as both Priest and Victim is implied, and it may be remarked here in passing that it is in connexion with the Eucharist as a Sacrifice that ancient writers for the most part speak of the Real Presence.<sup>1</sup> Again, if in the Sacrament there is acknowledged to be a real gift of Christ to us Communicants, it must also be recognised that Christ is truly present in His Sacrament, independently of ourselves, that we may be able to appropriate Him.

The faith of the Church has ever been that the spiritual grace of Communion with Christ in the Sacrament is a real gift, and is conveyed through the partaking of the consecrated Elements. This Catholic belief is plainly and well expressed in the authoritative teaching of the Anglican Church that "the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper."<sup>2</sup> The Elements after Consecration, accordingly, are no longer mere ordinary bread and wine. They are in the early Liturgies called holy; "Holy things to the holy," the priest is directed to say to the Communicants before reception;<sup>3</sup> and this being the belief of Christians care has naturally been taken at all

<sup>1</sup> "In the Church of God, which is the Body of Christ, neither are our priesthoods allowed, nor our sacrifices real, unless in the propriety of our nature, the true High-Priest reconcile us, the very Blood of the immaculate Lamb cleanse us."—LEO THE GREAT, *Ep.* xl.

<sup>2</sup> *Church Catechism*. Cf. Art. xxviii. "The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner." This wording is only consistent with belief in a Real objective Presence. Not a symbol or figure, but "the Body of Christ" is said to be "given" and "taken," and what is thus given and taken must (if we interpret the words in a natural sense) be present in the Sacrament externally to, and independently of the receiver. The *manner* of the Presence is a distinct question from that of its Reality.

<sup>3</sup> τὰ ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις, found e.g. in the Liturgy of S. James, the Constantinopolitan and Armenian Liturgies, and the Liturgy of Jerusalem, as quoted by S. CYRIL, *Lectures on the Mysteries*, v. 19.

times to guard the consecrated Elements from profanation,<sup>1</sup> and to provide that they should be handled with the greatest reverence.<sup>2</sup> Though to the outward senses the Elements after Consecration are nothing more than bread and wine, faith relies upon our Lord's word and sees in them His very Body and Blood, of which in feeding upon them we are made partakers. The most striking testimony to this faith in the Real Presence is found in the *Invocation* which forms a part of the Consecration in the Primitive Liturgies, wherein the priest prays that God would "send forth His Holy Spirit upon the elements lying before Him, that He may make the Bread the Body of Christ, and the Wine the Blood of Christ."<sup>3</sup> Of the two parts of the Sacrament, the outward sign and the inward grace, the one a matter of perception by the senses and the other apprehended by faith only, it is natural that devout Christians should dwell rather on the latter, making but slight reference to the former, and should speak, as Christian writers from the earliest times have spoken, of the consecrated Elements as being in truth the Body and the Blood of Christ, taking them, with a simple trust, to be what the Lord at the Institution pronounced them. The

<sup>1</sup> "Let no one eat or drink of your Eucharist, except those baptized into the Name of the Lord; for in regard to this the Lord hath said, 'Give not *that which is holy* to the dogs.'—*Didache*, cap. ix.

<sup>2</sup> "No one eateth that Flesh unless he hath first adored," S. AUGUSTINE, on *Ps. xcvi*. See also the rubrics in the Communion Office: "When all have communicated the Minister shall return to the Lord's Table and *reverently* place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated Elements, etc. . . . If any remain of that which was consecrated, it shall not be carried out of the Church, but the Priest and such other of the Communicants as he shall then call unto him, shall, immediately after the Blessing, *reverently* eat and drink the same."

<sup>3</sup> *Liturgy of Jerusalem*, as quoted by S. CYRIL, *Lectures on the Mysteries*, v. 7. The Invocation in nearly the same form of words is common to all Oriental Liturgies. In Western Liturgies it takes a somewhat different form, departing from Primitive usage in the fact that the direct agency of the Holy Spirit is not referred to. The Invocation has been omitted from the Anglican Office since 1552, but is retained in the Scotch Liturgy (1637 and 1764) and in the American Office.

attempt to understand our Lord's words in a figurative sense issues in evacuating them of all meaning, leads to the opinion, contrary to the faith of the Catholic Church, that there is no real gift of Christ to man in the Communion,<sup>1</sup> and in fact results in making our Lord's words mean, "This is *not* My Body." The allegorical interpretation of the words of Institution is no less inconsistent with S. Paul's teaching on the Sacrament in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, "Whosoever shall eat the Bread or drink the Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and the Blood of the Lord . . . he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the Body."<sup>2</sup> Such language could only be used by one who believed in the objective Presence in the Sacrament, for there could be no outrage upon the Body and Blood of the Lord on the part of an unworthy receiver if the Elements after Consecration were mere ordinary bread and wine, nor is it intelligible that blame should attach to failure to discriminate the Lord's Body, unless that Body were present to be discriminated.

Apart, then, from all speculation as to manner or means, we accept the words of Christ as they stand, and acknowledge that the Sacramental elements, duly consecrated, are in truth His Body and Blood. This belief is true, as has been shown, to Scripture teaching, and quotations will now be given from the Fathers showing that it has been the faith of the Church from Primitive times.

(a) S. Ignatius writes with reference to the Docetæ: "They abstain from the Eucharist, and from prayer, because they confess not that the Eucharist is the Flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which Flesh suffered for our sins, and which the Father of His goodness raised from the dead."<sup>3</sup> The Docetæ, in consequence of their theory as to the evil of matter, denied the literal truth of the Incarnation, maintain-

This is apparent in the case of Zwingli in the sixteenth century, and of those who have since followed him.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 27, 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Epistle to the Smyrncæans*, vii.

ing that the Son of God did not in reality take man's nature, but only in appearance or outward seeming,<sup>1</sup> and it was only natural that, holding these views, they should absent themselves from the Eucharist, for if Christ had no real Body there could of course be no real gift of His Body in the Sacrament. Apart from the great interest which attaches to the words of Ignatius as the earliest extant controversial statement concerning the Sacrament, the passage quoted affords the strongest possible testimony to the belief of the Church as a whole in the earlier part of the second century, since it is plain that unless Christians in general at that time did believe that the Eucharist was the Flesh of Christ the Docetæ would have felt no difficulty about the Sacrament, and there would have been no point in their absenting themselves from it.

(b) Justin Martyr's testimony to the belief of the Church is no less definite. "Not as common bread," he writes, "nor as common drink do we receive these (consecrated Elements), but in like manner as, by the word of God, Jesus Christ our Saviour was made Flesh, and had Flesh and Blood for the sake of our salvation; so also we have been taught that the food which has been consecrated by the word of prayer in His own words, from which our flesh and blood are nourished by assimilation, is the Flesh and Blood of that same Jesus Who was made flesh."<sup>2</sup>

(c) Irenæus takes the objective Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Sacrament as a generally admitted truth, and argues from it against the Gnostics who denied the resurrection of the body. "When, therefore," he says, "both the mingled cup and the created bread receive the word of God, and become the Eucharist of the Body of Christ, and by them the substance of our flesh both grows and consists, how can they say that the flesh is not capable of receiving the gift of God, that is, life eternal, when it is nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ, and is a member of Him."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hence the name *Docetæ* from the Greek *δοκεῖν*, meaning "to seem," "to appear."

<sup>2</sup> *Apology*, i. cap. 66.

<sup>3</sup> *Adv. Har.*, v. 2.

(d) The teaching of S. Cyril of Jerusalem is very express on this subject. "The Bread of the Eucharist after the Invocation of the Holy Spirit is no longer mere bread, but the Body of Christ."<sup>1</sup> "Contemplate not the Bread and Wine as mere elements, for they are the Body and Blood of Christ, according to the Lord's declaration; for even if sense suggest this to you, let faith rather stablish you. Judge not the matter from taste, but be fully assured without doubt that you have been vouchsafed the Body and Blood of Christ."<sup>2</sup> The same Father also quotes and comments upon the Invocation in the Liturgy as follows: "We call upon God, Who loves man, to send forth His Holy Spirit upon the Elements lying before Him, that He may make the Bread the Body of Christ, and the Wine the Blood of Christ, for everything whatsoever the Holy Ghost has touched, this is sanctified and transmuted."<sup>3</sup>

Our English Reformers strenuously professed to hold fast to the doctrines of the Primitive Church, and we find, accordingly, that the statements of the early Fathers on the Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, of which some examples have just been given, may be matched by statements quite as clear and strong in the writings of the Reformers.

(a) Ridley in his disputation at Oxford<sup>4</sup> affirmed his agreement with the early Fathers. "Think not," said he, "because I disallow that Presence which the first proposition maintaineth<sup>5</sup> . . . that I therefore go about to take away the true presence of Christ's Body in His supper rightly and duly ministered, which is grounded upon the Word of God, and made more plain by the commentaries of the faithful Fathers."<sup>6</sup> Ridley's opponents in this disputation charged him with

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures on the Mysteries*, iii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vi. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 7.

<sup>4</sup> April 17th, 1555.

<sup>5</sup> The proposition referred to, drawn up by Ridley's Romanist opponents, ran thus: "In the Sacrament of the Altar, by the virtue of God's word spoken of the priest, the natural Body of Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, and His natural Blood, are really present under the forms of bread and wine."—*Ridley's Works*, p. 194.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 201.

holding that a figure merely of the Body of Christ is given in the Sacrament, but the Reformer stoutly repudiated any such opinion, maintaining that Christ's Body is given, and not only a figure thereof,<sup>1</sup> and that His Body is really present in the Sacrament, spiritually and by grace,<sup>2</sup> so that "we behold with the eyes of faith Him present after grace, and spiritually set upon the Table; and we worship Him Which sitteth above, and is worshipped of the angels. For Christ is always assistant to His mysteries, as Augustine saith."<sup>3</sup> Again, in his last examination before the Commissioners<sup>4</sup> Ridley thus stated his belief and teaching: "Both you and I agree herein, that in the Sacrament is the very true and natural Body and Blood of Christ, even that which was born of the Virgin Mary, which ascended into Heaven, which sitteth on the right hand of God the Father, which shall come from thence to judge the quick and the dead; only we differ *in modo*, in the way and manner of being: we all confess one thing to be in the Sacrament, and dissent in the manner of being there. I, being fully by God's Word thereunto persuaded, confess Christ's natural Body to be in the Sacrament indeed by spirit and grace . . . and you make a grosser kind of being, enclosing a natural, a lively, and a moving body, under the shape or form of bread and wine. . . . In the Sacrament is a certain change, in that that bread, which was before common bread, is now made a lively presentation of Christ's Body, and not only a figure, but effectuously representeth His Body; that even as the mortal body was nourished by that visible bread, so is the internal soul fed with the heavenly food of Christ's Body, which the eyes of faith see, as the bodily eyes see only bread. Such a sacramental mutation I grant to be in the bread and wine, which truly is no small

<sup>1</sup> "I never said that Christ gave only a figure of His Body; for indeed He gave Himself in a real communication. . . . I say He gave His own Body verily, but He gave it by real, effectual, and spiritual communication."—*Ridley's Works*, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 249.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.

<sup>4</sup> September 30th, 1555.



change, but such a change as no mortal man can make, but only that omnipotency of Christ's Word."<sup>1</sup>

(b) Latimer defended himself against the imputation of holding low views concerning the Sacrament, such as were current amongst the extreme Reforming party at the time. "The same Presence," he writes, "may be called the real Presence (because to the faithful believer there is the real or spiritual Body of Christ), which thing I here rehearse, lest some sycophant or scorner should suppose me with the Anabaptist to make nothing else of the Sacrament but a bare and naked sign."<sup>2</sup>

(c) Jewel, in several places in his *Apology*, maintains the reality of the gift of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. One passage is here quoted: "We affirm that bread and wine are holy and heavenly mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ, and that by them Christ Himself, being the true Bread of eternal life, is in such a way set forth to us as present,<sup>3</sup> as that by faith we verily receive His Body and His Blood."<sup>4</sup>

Any view which regards the Eucharist as a merely figurative representation is entirely inadequate to explain the language of Scripture and of the Fathers which has been quoted. The gift, as has been shown, is set forth as a real one and as conveyed through participation of the consecrated Sacramental Elements, which, in accordance with the solemn words at the Institution—"This is My Body"—are regarded as *being* the Body and Blood of Christ. This faith that the Body and Blood of Christ are really given and received in the Sacrament the Church of England has always held and taught, but she is committed to no *theory as to the manner in which they are conveyed*. As to the *fact* of the Reality of the Presence and gift in the Sacrament the Anglican, Roman, and Eastern

<sup>1</sup> *Ridley's Works*, pp. 274, 275.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, vol. ii. p. 252.

<sup>3</sup> "Sic nobis præsentem exhiberi."

<sup>4</sup> *Apology*, part ii. p. 32 (ed. S.P.C.K.).

Churches and the Lutherans<sup>1</sup> are all agreed.<sup>2</sup> With regard to the *manner* of the Presence, however, there is no revelation in Scripture, and the early Fathers are content to rest in the truth, without attempting to define the mode, of the Presence. When attempts are made to define the manner then cleavage appears. Thus Ridley urged<sup>3</sup> that he was at one on the truth of the Real Presence of Christ's Body and Blood in the Sacrament with the Romanist Commissioners appointed to try him, and only differed from them *in modo*, as to the manner of the Presence. When men attempt to be wise above that which is written and to add to the faith of the undivided Church theories of purely human invention, they are beset with difficulties, and the theories which have been formed to explain the manner of Christ's Presence in the Sacrament, though some of them have won wide acceptance, are open to more or less serious objection. Theories on such a subject might indeed be held tentatively and as opinions, but the acceptance of such may on no account be decreed necessary to salvation, or made a condition of Communion.<sup>4</sup> Strife and division, with consequent harm and loss to the whole Body of Christ,

<sup>1</sup> "What is the Sacrament of the Altar? Answer: It is the true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, in and under the bread and wine, through Christ's Word, appointed for us Christians to eat and drink. . . . The Word is what makes and distinguishes the Sacrament, so that it is not mere bread and wine, but is, and is called, the Body and Blood of Christ."—*Luther's Greater Catechism*, p. 144, ed. Wace and Buchheim.

<sup>2</sup> "Our formulas declare the Real Presence in the Eucharist, thus connecting us with the Romish and Lutheran and Eastern Churches, and distinguishing us from the Presbyterian, Zwinglian, and Socinian."—*Dean Merivale's Autobiography*, 1866.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 269.

<sup>4</sup> The Council of Trent anathematised all who deny the doctrine of Transubstantiation. "If anyone shall say that in the holy Sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of the bread and of the wine remains conjointly with the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and shall deny that wondrous and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood, the appearance only of bread and wine remaining, which conversion, indeed, the Catholic Church most fitly calls Transubstantiation, let him be Anathema."—Session xiii., *Canon* ii.

are in that case the inevitable result. Three theories as to the manner of the Eucharistic Presence are especially noteworthy, and something must be said briefly about each of these.

As time went on men were not content with that simple faith in the Eucharistic Presence, without definition of the manner of it, which marked Primitive times; speculation began to work on the subject, and the most important issue of this was the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*. Paschasius Radbertus (d. 865), a monk of the Abbey of Corbey, wrote a treatise *On the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ*, in which he asserted the corporal Presence of Christ in the Sacrament, maintaining that the Elements are so transformed as to retain after consecration only the appearance (*figura*) of their natural substance, whereas that substance is replaced by the Body and Blood of Christ. Ratramnus, or Bertram, a monk of the same Abbey, opposed the teaching of Radbert, arguing for a Real, though not a corporal, Presence. The doctrine, however, seems to have made way, for when Berengarius, Archdeacon of Angers (1040), reaffirmed the teaching of Ratramnus against the corporal Presence, he was condemned and made to recant at Rome. The terms used with reference to the Eucharistic Presence in this recantation illustrate the conception that had become prevalent in the Western Church. Berengarius was made to acknowledge that "the bread and wine after consecration are not only a Sacrament, but also the very Body<sup>1</sup> and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that it is sensibly,<sup>2</sup> not only sacramentally, but in truth handled by the priest, broken, and ground by the teeth of the faithful." At the fourth Lateran Council (1215) the doctrine of the corporal Presence was affirmed, and the term "transubstantiate" was used to express the change effected by consecration.<sup>3</sup> Later the Council of Trent declared "that by

<sup>1</sup> "verum Corpus."

<sup>2</sup> "sensualiter."

<sup>3</sup> The decree of the fourth Lateran Council runs thus: "There is one universal Church of the faithful outside of which no one at all is saved; in which the same Jesus Christ is Himself both Priest and Sacrifice, whose Body and Blood are truly contained in the Sacrament of the Altar, under

the consecration of the bread and wine a conversion takes place of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the Body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His Blood, and this conversion is by the Holy Catholic Church conveniently and properly called Transubstantiation."<sup>1</sup> The Church of Rome is thus committed to the theory that after consecration the invisible substance or essence (*substantia*) of the Elements ceases to exist, being converted into, and so replaced by, the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ. The terminology used in setting out the doctrine is that current amongst the Schoolmen of the Middle Ages, and their philosophical opinions underlie it. Since the Elements after consecration retain the outward appearance (*species*) of bread and wine, the opinion that the essence or substance of a thing is separable from its *accidents* (*i.e.* form, touch, taste, smell, by which it is apprehended by the senses as localised in any given place) is necessarily involved in the Transubstantiation theory. This opinion belongs to an out-of-date philosophy, for it would scarcely now be admitted that the substance of a thing could be said to exist at all apart from its accidents; it is, moreover, quite incapable of proof, because we have no sense by which the substance of a thing can be apprehended apart from its accidents. Transubstantiation, properly considered, is thus a philosophic speculation rather than a theological doctrine, but though the word has, unfortunately, been retained by the Church of Rome as expressing her doctrine, the philosophy involved is practically obsolete and forgotten, and modern Romanist theologians would class as *accidents* all that modern natural science would regard as composing the *substance* of bread. Transubstantiation, owing to the advance of thought, is thus ambiguous, and Roman doctrine as now taught is at

the appearance of bread and wine, the bread being transubstantiated into His Body, and the wine into His Blood, by Divine power, so that for the perfecting of our mystical union we ourselves may receive of His that which He Himself received of ours" (cap. i.).

<sup>1</sup> Session xiii. (Oct., 1551).

least capable of being explained in such a way as to agree very nearly with the teaching of the English Church. The doctrine, as formally defined, is, however, open to very serious objections.

The first and all-important objection against the Transubstantiation theory is that it entirely lacks Scripture warrant and finds no support in the writings of the early Fathers. There is no hint in the New Testament that the outward sign in the Sacrament ceases to exist after consecration, but any such supposition is, on the contrary, repugnant to the Eucharistic teaching of the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup> Romanists in controversy direct attention almost exclusively to the words of Institution—"This is My Body"—and argue as though loyalty to our Lord demanded that we should not suppose that that could remain bread which He spoke of as His Body.<sup>2</sup> It must be remembered, however, that the words of Institution do not stand alone or constitute the whole New Testament teaching on the subject we are treating, but that S. Paul in his instruction on the Sacrament to the Corinthian Church repeatedly uses the term *bread* of the consecrated Element. "As often," he writes, "as ye eat this Bread, and drink the Cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat the Bread, or drink the Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the Bread, and drink of the Cup."<sup>3</sup> Not only is the language of Scripture thus repugnant to the theory under discussion, but that the Fathers held the substantial permanence of the Elements after consecration is apparent from the arguments which they base upon the Eucharist and the analogies they draw from it when combating those heresies which wrongly apprehended the union and mutual relation of the two natures,

<sup>1</sup> "Transubstantiation . . . cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture."—Art. xxviii.

<sup>2</sup> Thus S. Thomas Aquinas says: "It is said, 'This is My Body,' which would not be true if the substance of bread remained there."—*Summa Theol.*, part ii. quæst. lxxv.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 26-8.

Divine and human, in the Person of Christ. The Gnostics of the early ages rejected belief in the Incarnation in any real sense because the thought that the Supreme Deity could be united to a material body ran counter to their fundamental conceptions. Orthodox writers, on the other hand, maintained against them that Christ's Body was no phantom, but that the Son of God in reality took human flesh *just as He bestows His grace in the Church through material channels*. Thus Irenæus wrote: "The Eucharist confirms our opinion. For we offer unto Him His own creatures consistently proclaiming the fellowship and unity and confessing the resurrection of flesh and spirit. For as bread from the earth receiving upon it the invocation of God is no longer common bread but Eucharist made up of two things, an earthly and a heavenly; so also our bodies receiving the Eucharist are no longer corruptible, having the hope of the eternal resurrection."<sup>1</sup> This appeal to the doctrine of the Eucharist in illustration of his main contention against the Gnostics that there is no antagonism between the spiritual and the material makes it evident that neither did Irenæus hold any theory of Transubstantiation, nor was such theory the received doctrine of his day. Again, a little later the various forms of Monophysite heresy which implied the absorption of the human nature in our Lord's Divine nature were confuted and the Catholic doctrine illustrated by reference to the Eucharist wherein the material Elements are sanctified but not annihilated by that Spiritual Presence of which they are made the vehicle. As an example of this argument from the doctrine of the Eucharist to the doctrine of the Incarnation we may refer to the letter to Cæsarius attributed to S. Chrysostom, where the author makes the following comparison: "As before the bread is sanctified we call it bread, but when Divine grace has sanctified it by means of the priest, it is freed from the name of bread, and is thought worthy of the name of the Lord's Body, though the nature of bread remain

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Hær.*, IV. xviii. 5.



in it; and yet it is not said there are two bodies but one Body of the Son: so the Divine nature being joined to the Body, both these make one Son and one Person.”<sup>1</sup> Ephraim of Antioch also in a similar argument says that “the Body of Christ received by the faithful does not depart from its sensible substance.”<sup>2</sup> If further proof that the doctrine of Transubstantiation was unknown to the Fathers were needed we might refer to the way in which early writers speak of the bodies of the faithful as being nourished by reception of the consecrated Elements. Irenæus, for example, speaks of our Lord as having acknowledged “the Cup, which is a creature, as His own Blood, from which He gives increase to our blood; and the Bread, which is also a creature, He has established as His own Body, from which He gives increase to our bodies. When therefore,” continues Irenæus, “both the mingled Cup and the created Bread receive the word of God, and become the Eucharist of the Body and Blood of Christ, *and by them the substance of our flesh both grows and consists*, how can they say that the flesh is not capable of receiving the gift of God, that is, life eternal, when it is nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ, and is a member of Him.”<sup>3</sup>

A second objection against the theory of Transubstantiation is that the idea of the annihilation of the natural substance of the Elements after consecration, by destroying the outward and visible sign, overthrows the Sacramental nature of the ordinance.<sup>4</sup> By a Sacrament is meant, as has been shown in a previous chapter,<sup>5</sup> an outward sign of some holy

<sup>1</sup> Given in ROUTH, *Script. Eccles. Opusc.*, II. 127 (Oxford, 1858).

<sup>2</sup> ROUTH, *Script. Eccles. Opusc.*, p. 143. Other quotations from Patristic writings to the same effect are cited by BURNET, *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, pp. 439, 440, and by GORE, *Dissertations on Subjects connected with the Incarnation*, pp. 274-6.

<sup>3</sup> *Adv. Her.*, V. ii. 2. Other quotations to the same effect are given by BURNET, *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, pp. 441, 442.

<sup>4</sup> “Transubstantiation . . . overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament.” —Art. xxviii.

<sup>5</sup> See above, chap. ix., p. 147.

thing, an outward sign whereby spiritual grace is conveyed. The very notion of a Sacrament therefore demands that there should be both the outward and visible sign (*signum*) and the inward grace or thing signified (*res*); each part must be there, and each true, that the Sacrament may be perfect. But the Transubstantiation theory implies that the *signum* ceases to exist in its proper nature after consecration, being altogether changed into the *res*, and the Sacramental character of the rite is accordingly destroyed. Calvin saw the force of this argument against Transubstantiation and urged it with great effect. "There would be no consistency," he writes, "in the signification, if the external sign were not a living image of the truth which is represented in it. By the external sign Christ intended to declare that His Flesh is meat. If He were to set before us a mere spectre of bread, and not real bread, where would be the analogy or similitude, which ought to lead us from the visible emblem to the invisible substance. . . . The nature of a Sacrament is therefore overthrown unless in its manner of signification the earthly sign correspond to the heavenly reality; and consequently we lose the truth of this mystery unless true bread represent the true Body of Christ."<sup>1</sup> As has been noted above when dealing with the first objection against Transubstantiation, the early Fathers treated the doctrine of the Eucharist as parallel with the doctrine of the Incarnation, and used the one to prove and illustrate the other. The chief errors and misconceptions as to the Sacrament will similarly be found to run on parallel lines with the chief heresies which assail the truth of the Incarnation. Transubstantiation by denying the substantial existence of the *signum* and regarding it as altogether absorbed in the *res* of the Sacrament, reduces it to a mere appearance which deceives the senses, so that the Roman theory as to the Presence in the Eucharist is parallel to Docetism or to Monophysite opinions as to the relation of the Divine and human in the Person of Christ. It was when arguing against

<sup>1</sup> *Institutes*, IV. xvii. 14.

these forms of error that the Fathers appealed to the permanence and reality of the natural substance of the consecrated Elements, but any such appeal becomes quite out of the question if the Transubstantiation theory be accepted.

A third objection against the theory of Transubstantiation may fairly be urged on the ground of its results in practice. The effect of the spread of the doctrine in Mediæval times was, instead of raising the spiritual part of the Sacrament, rather to materialise it, the consecrated Host being regarded not so much as spiritual food, for the lay-people rarely communicated, but treated too exclusively as an object of worship. The Sacrament was venerated not so much on account of the spiritual gift conveyed by Divine power through it, but rather worshipped in and for itself, on account of what it was believed to have wholly become. The gross and materialistic conceptions of the Eucharistic Presence that were current may be illustrated by reference to the Mediæval stories of alleged miraculous appearances of our Lord upon the Altar. By a priest named Plecgils, in the fifth century, it was said the form of a little child was seen in place of the Host, and drops of blood, it was alleged, were seen to flow when Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury, broke the Host.<sup>1</sup> In popular practice superstitious uses of the Sacrament easily followed.<sup>2</sup> We read of the reserved Host being used as a charm; sometimes it was worn round the neck for protection when upon a journey in time of danger,<sup>3</sup> or carried by those who underwent the ordeal of fire,<sup>4</sup> or buried with the bodies of the dead.<sup>5</sup> That superstitious uses were common in pre-Reformation times is shown by the rubric at the end of the

<sup>1</sup> These instances, with others of a similar kind, are given by BLUNT, *Dictionary of Historical and Doctrinal Theology*, art. "Transubstantiation."

<sup>2</sup> "Transubstantiation . . . hath given occasion to many superstitions." —Art. xxviii.

<sup>3</sup> As by Pope Benedict XIII. when he fled in disguise from Avignon.

<sup>4</sup> As by Fra Domenico when it was proposed that he should undergo the ordeal of fire on behalf of Savonarola.

<sup>5</sup> See this subject treated by SCUDAMORE, *Notitia Eucharistica*, p. 920.

Communion Office in the Prayer Book of 1549, which provides that "the people commonly receive the Sacrament of Christ's Body *in their mouths* at the priest's hand," the reason given for this direction being that when delivered into the hands of the communicants "they many times conveyed the same secretly away, kept it with them, and diversely abused it to superstition and wickedness."

Luther and those who followed him repudiated Transubstantiation, but at the same time held strongly to a belief in the Real Presence,<sup>1</sup> and maintained that the words of Institution must be taken in their literal sense;<sup>2</sup> accordingly the Body and Blood of Christ were said to be present in, with, or under the Bread and Wine, which remain after consecration in their natural substance. *Consubstantiation* is the name which has been generally given to this opinion that after consecration the substance of Christ's Body and Blood coexisted in union with the substance of Bread and Wine.<sup>3</sup>

The theory, strictly understood, is open to objection on more than one ground:—

Its philosophical associations are similar to those of the Roman theory, and it seems to involve a material conception of a heavenly mystery, as though in an earthly mode Bread and Wine were mingled with the Lord's Body and Blood. Thus Luther writes: "The Body of Christ is (the bread still existing) in the Sacrament, as fire is in iron (the substance

<sup>1</sup> "The Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, and are distributed to them that eat in the Lord's Supper."—*Augsburg Confession*, part i. art. x.

<sup>2</sup> "We believe that the words of the Testament of Christ are not to be taken otherwise than in their literal sense, so that it is not the case that the Bread signifies the absent Body of Christ, and the Wine His absent Blood, but, on account of sacramental union, the Bread and the Wine are truly the Body and Blood of Christ."—*Formula of Concord*, p. 559.

<sup>3</sup> "We believe that in the Lord's Supper the Body and Blood of Christ are truly and substantially present, and that, together with the Bread and Wine, they are truly distributed and received."—*Formula of Concord*, p. 559.

of the iron existing) and as God is in man (the human nature existing)—the substances in each case being so united that each retains its own operations and proper nature, and yet they constitute one thing.”<sup>1</sup> Luther’s own teaching was not always quite consistent, but as set out in the quotation just given, and as frequently held during the sixteenth century, the Lutheran doctrine as to the Sacrament would seem to be parallel to the Eutychian theory as to the relation of the human and Divine in the Person of Christ.

A further objection against this doctrine lies in the fact that it was so held and taught by Lutherans as apparently to carry with it as a necessary consequence a belief in the ubiquity of our Lord’s human nature. Hence those in Switzerland who held Lutheran views on the Sacrament were, by their opponents, named *Ubiquitarians*, and their position was strongly attacked by Calvin. “They acknowledge,” he says, “that the Bread in the Supper is truly the substance of the earthly and corruptible element, and undergoes no change in itself, but that it has included under it the Body of Christ. . . . But because by placing the Body Itself in the Bread they attribute ubiquity to it, which is contrary to its nature, and by adding ‘under the Bread’ they mean that it lies concealed there, it is necessary to drag out such subtleties from their hiding-places.”<sup>2</sup>

Upon examination it is clear that the doctrine of Consubstantiation does very little after all in the way of explaining the manner of Christ’s Presence in the Sacrament; and when it is somewhat loosely held, so that by it men do no more than assert that the elements of Bread and Wine and the true Body and Blood of Christ are both present in the Sacrament, it is not contrary to Scripture or to Primitive teaching, and as an opinion may be borne with,<sup>3</sup> nor is it inconsistent with what is laid down as to the Sacrament in

<sup>1</sup> *Letter to Henry VIII.* quoted by PUSEY, *Doctrine of the Real Presence*, p. 43 (ed. 1855).

<sup>2</sup> *Institutes*, IV. xvii. 16.

<sup>3</sup> See BURNET, *Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 453.

Anglican Formularies. Archbishop Temple has recently emphasised this last point. While, in his opinion, Hooker's explanation<sup>1</sup> "entirely satisfies all the language of the Articles and the Prayer Book," at the same time, he continues, "it is nowhere explicitly asserted so as to exclude altogether the other opinion, namely, that in some mysterious way there is a Presence attached to the elements from the moment of their consecration. . . . This doctrine the Privy Council refused to condemn."<sup>2</sup> Though it be not explicitly taught in our formularies, there is nothing in those formularies which explicitly forbids a man to hold or teach it. It is difficult, if not impossible, really to distinguish between this doctrine and the Lutheran doctrine commonly called Consubstantiation, and it is important that it should be clearly understood that it is not unlawful to hold it and to teach it within the Church of England."<sup>3</sup>

Calvin and the Reformers of the Geneva school maintained that while there is no objective Presence in the Sacrament, the Bread and Wine being symbols only to which no Presence of Christ is attached after consecration, yet those who receive in faith do in some true sense partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, which are thus in effect, or virtually, communicated to them simultaneously with the

<sup>1</sup> Viz., that "the real presence of Christ's most blessed body and blood is not to be sought for in the Sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the Sacrament."—*Ecclesiastical Polity*, V. lxvii. 6. This explanation is the same as the Calvinistic doctrine criticised below, p. 282. Archbishop Temple's statement that it "entirely satisfies all the language" of Anglican formularies is, to say the least, open to very serious question.

<sup>2</sup> Viz., in the case of the Rev. W. J. E. Bennett, of Frome, who had asserted "the Real and actual Presence of our Lord under the form of Bread and Wine upon the Altars of our churches." He had also said of himself, "Who myself adore and teach the people to adore Christ present in the Sacrament, under the form of Bread and Wine, believing that under their veil is the sacred Body and Blood of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

<sup>3</sup> Archbishop TEMPLE'S *Charge delivered at his First Visitation*, 1898, pp. 9, 10.



consecrated Elements.<sup>1</sup> This teaching has been generally called the doctrine of the *Virtual* Presence.

Owing to a strong reaction from Transubstantiation, which they have rightly felt to be a carnal view, and one which so confounded the outward sign with the thing signified as to involve its complete absorption, those who hold this doctrine of a Virtual Presence have fallen into an opposite error, so as practically to separate the two parts of the Sacrament and lose sight of the true connexion between the visible sign and the inward part or thing signified. From the life and work of the Incarnate Son of God as set forth to us in the Gospels it is manifest that our Lord's humanity is the means through which God makes His appeal to us, and through which we partake of His Divinity and of the spiritual blessings which He wills to bestow. The Calvinistic doctrine of the Eucharist appears to ignore this true relation of the material and spiritual which the Incarnation has taught us, and to misunderstand the Sacramental character of God's way of working of which the Incarnation affords the great example. If Transubstantiation, which confounds the "res" of the Sacrament with the "signum," corresponds to Monophysite opinion as to the relation of the human and Divine in the Person of Christ, then Calvinistic doctrine, which goes to the opposite extreme of denying the connexion between the "res" and the "signum," and separates the one from the other, appears to be parallel to the Nestorian heresy on the Incarnation. The true connexion of the material and the spiritual being thus not apprehended, the Calvinistic theory reduces the grace of the Sacrament simply to the action of the Divine Spirit upon the human spirit immediately, and on this view the necessity of the outward sign, so specially

<sup>1</sup> "Whatever may serve to express the true and substantial communication of the Lord's Body and Blood, which is set forth to the faithful under the sacred symbols of the Supper, I willingly admit, and in such a way that they are understood to receive, not in the imagination only or with the understanding of the mind, but to enjoy the thing itself for nourishment unto eternal life."—*Institutes*, IV. xvii. 19.

appointed by Christ, is not very obvious, for the inward grace is only nominally attached to it.

Upon this theory of a Virtual Presence of Christ's Body and Blood it follows that the Sacrament, instead of being a channel through which a real benefit is conveyed, is in itself a barren symbol from which no grace is derived save only what individual faith may bring to it. This practically amounts to there being no inward part in the Sacrament at all unless faith is present to call it into being. The completion and validity of the Sacrament, accordingly, would depend on man's worthiness, and not simply upon Christ's institution and promise; faith, in short, would be necessary in order to make it a Sacrament at all, and the validity of the ordinance would be rendered a matter of grave uncertainty if we were to suppose that Christ gives nothing unless our faith, often so weak and imperfect, combine to procure the presence of the Gift. We acknowledge, indeed, that faith is necessary on man's part in order to a beneficial reception. Christ does His part according to His promise, and gives His Body and Blood; then we are called upon to do our part by receiving in faith and worthily. But the theory we are considering so confounds a beneficial reception with the reality of the Gift offered that the latter is, in effect, lost sight of and excluded altogether.

From what has been already said it has been made clear that the doctrine of an objective Presence of Christ, and of the reality of the Gift offered and bestowed in the Sacrament, was taught in the Primitive Church, believed by the English Reformers, and embodied in the Anglican Liturgy and Formularies. The same doctrine is also maintained by the Roman Church, by the Greek Church,<sup>1</sup> and other Churches

<sup>1</sup> Owing to the formal adoption of the word *μετουσίωσις* (in the seventeenth century) it is sometimes thought that the Orthodox Eastern Church is definitely committed to the Roman theory of Transubstantiation, and in English translations of Greek Catechisms *μετουσίωσις* is generally rendered by *Transubstantiation*. The rendering, however, is altogether misleading if the use of the word is supposed to imply acceptance of the Roman

of the East, and by the Lutherans, though fortunately we Anglicans are not committed to the theories held by some of these other Christians as to the precise manner of the Presence of Christ. Regarding, then, the objective reality of the Gift in the Eucharist as a truth attested by general consent of Christendom from the earliest times, we pass next to consider the further question—How is the inward grace of the Sacrament subjectively appropriated by the individual Communicant? In answer to this inquiry it will be shown that there are three requisites in order to a beneficial reception on man's part, corresponding to the three aspects of the Eucharist as a means of grace, as a near approach to the Divine Presence, and as the Sacrament of membership in the Body of Christ and the bond of unity.

In the first place, if the Eucharist be regarded as a means through which God confers grace, *faith* is required of those who come to it. Faith is the quality by which, while still in the body, we discern spiritual things and apprehend spiritual blessings, therefore faith is laid down as a requisite on man's part in order that he may appropriate the grace of the Sacrament. "The mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith."<sup>1</sup> The same

doctrine represented by it. The reality of the sacramental teaching of the Eastern Church is undoubted, but equally strong and unmistakable is its rejection of the materialised doctrine of the Church of Rome. The Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow expressly declared in 1867: "All definitions or pretended explanations, such as the use of the word *Transsubstantziatsija* (the recognised Slavonic word is *Presushchestolénie*), are nothing but attempts to penetrate into the mystery, and thereby they overthrow the essence of a Sacrament" (cf. our Art. xxviii.). That the Eastern Church has never committed itself to the Scholastic theories of the West is similarly asserted by Khomiakoff in his *Essay on the Church*, where he says, "She does not reject the word Transubstantiation (*μετουσίωσις*), but she does not assign to it that material meaning which is assigned to it by the teachers of the Churches which have fallen away." See further on this subject HEADLAM, *The Teaching of the Russian Church*, pp. 8-11, and MASON, *Faith of the Gospel*, p. 294.

<sup>1</sup> Art. xxviii. Cf. *Church Catechism*: "What is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper? . . . To have a lively faith in God's mercy

principle thus holds good of each of the two great Sacraments of the Christian Covenant. The Gift must come to us from outside, from the Lord Himself, by the agency of the Holy Spirit working through the chosen means. Faith cannot make the Gift;<sup>1</sup> but, on the other hand, only faith can make use of it, because it is spiritually discerned. Without faith it is impossible to please God,<sup>2</sup> and in the Eucharist, as the highest act of worship, the greatest exercise of faith is called for. There must be faith in the efficacy of Christ's atoning Sacrifice, faith in the living Saviour Who intercedes for us within the veil, and faith in the power of the Holy Spirit Who operates through the means which Christ has appointed in His Church.

It has been shown that in the Eucharist we enter the heavenly Holy of Holies, and in a very special manner are brought near to the Divine Presence. Exercising the priestly office which is ours by virtue of our membership in the Body of Christ<sup>3</sup> we plead before the Father the one true, perfect Sacrifice, and feeding upon that same Sacrifice we receive Christ Himself to dwell within us. But God heareth not sinners,<sup>4</sup> He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity,<sup>5</sup> and sin must always separate man from Him,<sup>6</sup> therefore *purity from sin* is an essential for those who thus draw near to offer before Him,<sup>7</sup> and to receive His indwelling Presence. The Holy Gifts in the Sacrament are for the holy.<sup>8</sup> Recognising this, the Church provides that open and notorious evil-livers shall

through Christ." See also the *Exhortation in the Communion Office*: "have a lively and stedfast faith in Christ our Saviour"; and the *Short Exhortation*: "Draw near with faith and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort."

<sup>1</sup> See above, chap. ix., p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xi. 6.

<sup>3</sup> 1 S. Peter ii. 5.

<sup>4</sup> S. John ix. 31; Ps. lxvi. 18.

<sup>5</sup> Hab. i. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Isa. lix. 2.

<sup>7</sup> This principle is emphasised in the Old Testament by the elaborate regulations for the ceremonial purification of those who entered upon the sacred functions of the priestly office. See Exod. xxix.; xl. 12; Lev. viii.; xxi.

<sup>8</sup> τὰ ἅγια τοῖς ἁγίοις the priest is directed in Eastern Liturgies to say to the people before their reception of the consecrated Elements.

be warned that they presume not to come to the Lord's Table until they have openly repented and made restitution.<sup>1</sup> Self-examination, confession of sin to God, and purpose of amendment of life, are, further, set forth to all as preliminaries to an approach to the Sacrament.<sup>2</sup> Those who after such self-examination are disquieted in conscience and deem themselves unfit to draw near, are especially invited to make confession to a priest, and open their grief that they may receive the benefit of Absolution.<sup>3</sup> Finally all, as they are gathered before the Altar, are asked by the Church to join in a humble confession of sin, and absolution is pronounced over the congregation in the Name of God before they join in the great act of offering the Eucharist and receive the Communion together.

It has been shown above that viewed in one of its aspects the Eucharist is the Sacrament of membership in the Body of Christ, and the bond of unity of the members.<sup>4</sup> The Sacrament is thus, as our Article says, "a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another,"<sup>5</sup> and a third requisite for beneficial reception, besides faith and purity from sin, is *charity*.<sup>6</sup> The mutual charity which should characterise those who come together to the Lord's Table was in primitive times outwardly signified

<sup>1</sup> See the second rubric at the commencement of the *Communion Office*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Church Catechism*: "What is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper? To examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life." See also the *Exhortation in the Communion Office*: "Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord; repent you of your sins past"; and the *Short Exhortation*: "Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins . . . draw near."

<sup>3</sup> See Exhortation in the *Communion Office* appointed to be used when the Minister giveth warning for the celebration of the Holy Communion.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 261-2.

<sup>5</sup> Art. xxviii.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Church Catechism*: "What is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper? To . . . be in charity with all men." See also the Exhortation in the *Communion Office*: "Amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men: so shall ye be meet partakers of those holy Mysteries."

by the symbolic action of the Kiss of Peace. Both S. Peter and S. Paul in the New Testament enjoin mutual salutation with a holy kiss,<sup>1</sup> and it has been inferred from this that the custom of interchanging the Kiss in the Liturgy was instituted by Apostolic authority; at any rate the Liturgical Kiss of Peace must have been introduced very early, being probably considered the best method of compliance with the Apostolic injunctions. The custom is frequently alluded to in Patristic writings; it is mentioned, *e.g.*, by Justin Martyr,<sup>2</sup> Tertullian,<sup>3</sup> S. Cyril of Jerusalem,<sup>4</sup> and S. Augustine,<sup>5</sup> and has its regular place in the early Liturgies. After the thirteenth century the mutual salutation fell into disuse in the West, and instead, all present, beginning with the priest, kissed a tablet of metal or wood marked with the Cross, which was passed round. Though no symbolic action is now practised amongst us to give outward expression to our mutual charity, there is still, at the corresponding place in the Office, the intimation given by the priest in the short Exhortation: "Ye that . . . are in love and charity with your neighbours . . . draw near . . . and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort."

Faith, purity from sin, and charity being thus the subjective conditions required in those who receive the Sacrament, it is clear that there can be no beneficial reception by those who are in a state of wilful sin, or who draw near to the Holy

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Thess. v. 26; 1 S. Peter v. 14.

<sup>2</sup> "Having finished the prayers we salute one another with a Kiss. Then bread and a cup of water and wine are brought," etc.—*Apology*, i. cap. lxv.

<sup>3</sup> "What prayer is complete from which the holy Kiss is divorced? . . . What kind of sacrifice is it from which men depart without the Peace?"—*De Oratione*, cap. xviii.

<sup>4</sup> "Then the deacon calls out, 'Receive ye one another and let us salute one another.' . . . This Kiss is a sign that our souls are mingled together and banish all remembrance of injury."—*Lectures on the Mysteries*, v. 3.

<sup>5</sup> "We say the Lord's Prayer . . . after that is said, 'Peace be with you,' and Christians kiss one another with the Holy Kiss which is the sign of peace."—*Serm.* ccxxvi.



Mysteries without faith. The doctrine that the Sacrament takes Its effect *ex opere operato* is mischievous if it be held in so crude a form as to result in an opinion that the Sacrament acts as a charm in a mechanical way.<sup>1</sup> While the Sacrament cannot have a beneficial effect in the case of such as come to It without faith and unprepared, it is at the same time equally true that Its essential completeness in no way depends upon the worthiness or unworthiness of the receiver. It is none the less a perfect Sacrament, consisting of two parts—the outward sign and the inward reality truly present—be the Communicants never so unworthy or unfaithful.<sup>2</sup> The benefit or virtue of the Sacrament which the worthy Communicant receives is thus to be distinguished from the Sacrament Itself, that is, it is a different thing from those two parts of which the essential nature of the Sacrament is made up.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, in considering the Eucharist there are three distinct things to be taken account of: (1) the outward and visible sign (*signum*); (2) the inward part or thing signified, viz. the Body and Blood of Christ (*res*);

<sup>1</sup> For the true doctrine of *opus operatum* see above, chap. ix., p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> So S. Augustine, referring to Baptism, writes: "Nor doth it make any difference when the question is touching the perfectness and holiness of the Sacrament, what be the belief and what the faith of the man who receiveth the Sacrament. It maketh indeed all the difference in respect of the way of Salvation, but in respect of the question what a Sacrament is, it maketh no difference at all"—*Contra Donatist.*, iii. 21. The Articles subscribed by Bucer, Melancthon, and other Reformers when proposals for concord were made at Wittenburg contain the following passage: "The Institution of the Sacrament made by Christ hath its own efficacy in the Church of Christ; and doth not depend either upon the worthiness or unworthiness of the minister who giveth the Sacrament, or of him who receiveth it." Similarly Luther, in the *Greater Catechism*: "This most holy Sacrament remains unalterable; it is not divested of anything, even though we receive it and treat it unworthily. Dost thou think that God takes into consideration our actions and belief, so as to change His ordinances because of them?"—*Luther's Primary Works*, pp. 143, 144 (ed. Wace and Buchheim).

<sup>3</sup> "The Sacrament is one thing, the virtue of the Sacrament is another. How many receive from the Altar and die, yea, by receiving die!"—S. AUGUSTINE, *In Jo. Tract.*, xxvi. 11.

the union of these two constitutes the complete Sacrament, and from its due use there flows (3) the benefit conferred on the recipient (*virtus Sacramenti*).<sup>1</sup>

Now, of these three parts of the Sacrament it is obvious that the first—the *signum*—is received by all Communicants, and the second—the *res*—must be admitted to be really there, and at least to be offered to Communicants; a contrary opinion as regards the second would, in fact, overthrow the nature of a Sacrament by taking away the inward part, and reducing the *signum* to an empty token of something absent. Of the third part—the *virtus* of the Sacrament—it must be affirmed, as follows from what has been stated above, that unworthy Communicants do not participate in it, for Christ cannot spiritually dwell in a soul which is void of faith in Him,<sup>2</sup> or which is in a state of wilful sin,<sup>3</sup> or which is destitute of love towards Him as manifested in love of the brethren and mutual charity.<sup>4</sup> Therefore it is rightly maintained in the Thirty-nine Articles that “the wicked and such as be void of a lively faith . . . are in no wise partakers of Christ.”<sup>5</sup>

Yet since, as has been shown, the Sacrament is essentially

<sup>1</sup> In support of this treatment of the subject it may be noted that the Eucharistic teaching of the *Church Catechism* is given in the form of answers to three distinct questions:—What is the outward part or sign (*signum*) of the Lord's Supper? What is the inward part or thing signified (*res*)? What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby (*virtus Sacramenti*)? Archbishop Cranmer gives a similar definition: “There be all these things together in the Holy Communion, Christ Himself spiritually eaten and drunken, and nourishing the right believers; the Bread and Wine as a Sacrament declaring the same.”—*Second Book against Transubstantiation*, p. 312. ADRIAN SARAVIA, in his *Treatise on the Holy Eucharist* (presented to James I., 1604–5), expressly adopts the threefold division of the subject: “In the Sacrament there be three things to be considered, which be severally to be distinguished. The outward visible sign, and the invisible and heavenly Thing united Sacramentally to the sign, and the third thing, which floweth from them, the benefit of the Sacrament” (p. 23, ed. Denison).

<sup>2</sup> Eph. iii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. x. 21; 2 Cor. vi. 15.

<sup>4</sup> 1 S. John iii. 10, 14, 15.

<sup>5</sup> Art. xxix.

complete apart from the worthiness or otherwise of them that administer and use it;<sup>1</sup> since, accordingly, it neither derives virtue and efficacy from the faithfulness of the receivers, nor suffers any loss or diminution of its power and perfection by reason of their unfaithfulness, it follows that the Sacrament always takes some effect, though not always the same effect. To the worthy it is a savour of life unto life, but to the unworthy a savour of death unto death. Thus S. Paul in his instructions on the Sacrament addressed to the Corinthians plainly says, "Whosoever shall eat the Bread or drink the Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and the Blood of the Lord";<sup>2</sup> and again, "he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the Body";<sup>3</sup> and this language of Scripture finds an echo in our Article xxix.: "The wicked and such as be void of a lively faith . . . are in no wise partakers of Christ, but rather to their condemnation do eat and drink the sign or Sacrament of so great a thing."

It would seem to follow from the language of S. Paul which has been quoted that the consecrated Elements as presented to the wicked, and as Sacramentally received by them, are not mere bread and wine. A person who received unworthily could scarcely be said to be guilty of the Body and Blood

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the testimony which has been already cited on this point we may quote the following: "As we do not estimate the perfection of the Sacraments from the worthiness or unworthiness of the ministers, so neither do we from the state of the receivers. For we acknowledge that the Sacraments depend for their perfection upon the faith or truth and the simple goodness of God . . . the Sacraments remain true and perfect Sacraments, not only because they signify holy things, but because God offers also the things signified, although unbelievers receive not the things offered. This comes to pass, not by any fault of God, Who gives or offers, but by the fault of men, who receive without faith and unlawfully, whose unbelief does not make of none effect the faithfulness of God."—*Second Helvetic Confession*, Art. xix. This statement is all the more remarkable occurring as it does in a formulary widely accepted by the Swiss school of Reformers, who held in general what would be called low views on the Eucharist.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 27.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 29.

of the Lord if the Elements after consecration, and as presented to him for reception, were no more than ordinary bread and wine;<sup>1</sup> nor would there be any blame attaching to failure to discriminate the Lord's Body, unless that sacred Body were Sacramentally present to be discerned.<sup>2</sup> Saravia thus comments on S. Paul's words and draws the obvious inference: "Any one taking the Sacrament of the Lord unworthily, doth not, because he is himself evil, make the Sacrament evil, nor can it be said that because he doth not receive unto salvation, that therefore he hath received nothing; for the Sacrament was nevertheless the Body of the Lord and the Blood of the Lord, even to those of whom the Apostle said, 'He who eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.' The very reason for which they be held to eat and to drink unworthily, who do not first approve themselves unto God, and so eat and drink their own condemnation, appears to me to remove every possible ground of controversy upon the matter: for the cause assigned is this; that they discern not the Lord's Body. Whence I consider the inference to be rightly drawn that the Body of the Lord had been given Sacramentally to these very persons, together with the Bread."<sup>3</sup> If this be a true conclusion it must be held that all Communicants alike not only receive the outward part, but are also brought into contact with the *res*—the Sacramental Presence of the Lord's Body and Blood—which the unworthy treat amiss to their condemnation, but which the faithful receive in such a way as to share the *virtue* of the Sacrament and to become spiritually partakers of Christ through a due use of the means which He Himself has appointed.<sup>4</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 27.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Treatise on the Holy Eucharist*, p. 103.

<sup>4</sup> "The disbelief of men doth nothing impair the dignity of the Sacrament, and make it to be not that to all men which God hath appointed it to be, or that it be in any wise less holy. But it is faith which maketh us partakers of the holiness and grace which the Sacraments contain; and of this benefit unbelief depriveth him who eateth and drinketh, and maketh him guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ which he trampleth under foot: but it doth not take away the essence of a Sacrament. For a Sacrament,

Sacramental eating of the Saviour's Body and Blood (*i.e.* reception of the *res*) is therefore to be distinguished from the Spiritual partaking of Christ (*i.e.* reception of the *res* and of the *virtus* of the Sacrament). The distinction between eating, Sacramentally, the Lord's Body and Blood and partaking Spiritually of Christ is one that was well known and observed in the controversies of the Reformation period, and is frequently referred to as an acknowledged distinction by the writers of that time.<sup>1</sup> It is a distinction, moreover, that underlies the wording of the Prayer of Humble Access in our Communion Office, where we pray, "Grant us *so to eat* the Flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink His Blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us," language which involves the implication that there is such a thing as a Sacramental eating of the Flesh and Blood of Christ which does not issue in the blessed result of our Spiritual participation in Him and His indwelling in the soul.

We conclude, then, that while only the faithful are Spiritually partakers of Christ in the Eucharist, it may be held that all Communicants, including the unworthy, Sacramentally eat the Lord's Body and Blood. The Church of Rome, by its theory of the conversion of the whole substance of the Elements at consecration into the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ,<sup>2</sup> is necessarily committed to the

by whomsoever it be taken, remaineth that Thing which it is, namely a sacred Thing, consisting of a thing earthly and a Thing heavenly."—A. SARAVIA, *Treatise on the Holy Eucharist*, pp. 79–81 (ed. Denison).

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* BULLINGER thus writes concerning Judas at the Last Supper: "He received the Sacrament of Christ's Body as the other disciples did, but because he had not faith as the others had, he partaked not of Christ; neither did he eat and drink the Lord's Body and Blood"—*Against the Lutherans*, v. 9. It will be noted that Bullinger here observes the distinction between eating Sacramentally and partaking Spiritually, although he (in common with Reformers of the Swiss school in general) denies that the wicked do either. See further the quotations from Cranmer and Ridley given below, p. 295.

<sup>2</sup> *Decrees of the Council of Trent*, session xiii.

opinion that the wicked receive Sacramentally the true Body of Christ,<sup>1</sup> and in this respect holds to the teaching of the scholastic doctors of the West.<sup>2</sup> Luther similarly maintained that "though it be a rogue who takes or gives the Sacrament, it is the right Sacrament—that is Christ's Body and Blood—just as though he handled it with utmost reverence. For it is not based on the holiness of mankind, but upon God's Word; and since no saint on earth, yea, no angel in Heaven, can make bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood, so no one can change or alter it, although it be wrongly used. For neither the person nor the unbelief can falsify the Word by which it became a Sacrament and was instituted as such. For He did not say: If ye believe or are worthy, ye have My Body and Blood; but 'Take, eat and drink: this is My Body and Blood: this do' (that is, what I do now institute, give you, and bid you take). This is as much as to say, whether thou art worthy or unworthy, thou hast here His Body and Blood by virtue of these words, which come to the bread and wine."<sup>3</sup> The Reformers of the Swiss school who generally speaking denied the Objective Presence, also denied not only that the wicked are partakers of Christ, but that they can be said in any sense to receive, or to eat, the Lord's Body.<sup>4</sup> Bucer, however, whose case is the more interesting on account of his influence upon prominent Anglican Reformers, although in the heat of disputation he had

<sup>1</sup> "Some receive It Sacramentally only, viz. sinners; others only Spiritually . . . a third class both Sacramentally and Spiritually at the same time."—*Decrees of the Council of Trent*, session xiii. cap. viii.

<sup>2</sup> S. ANSELM taught that "though the wicked do not receive the virtue of the Sacrament, yet it must not be denied that they receive not only the species, but also the true substance of the Body of Christ."—*Opera*, tom. ii. pp. 163-5 (ed. Gerberon). See also S. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiæ*, iii. 80. 3: "Seeing that the Body of Christ always remains in the Sacrament until the Sacramental Species are corrupted, it follows that even wicked men do eat the Body of Christ."

<sup>3</sup> *Greater Catechism*. *Luther's Primary Works*, p. 145 (ed. Wace and Buchheim). See also BEARD, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 138.

<sup>4</sup> See the quotation from Bullinger given above, p. 292, n. 1.



maintained an opinion contrary to that held by Luther, afterwards upon mature consideration retracted it. "Who is there," he writes, "that believeth the words of Christ, and can think or say anything else but this; that, through all time, whensoever the Holy Eucharist be celebrated according to the institution of the Lord, together with the Bread and Wine, the very Body and Blood of the Lord be given and exhibited to all who do take this Sacrament."<sup>1</sup> The leading Anglican Reformers maintained the distinction, which has been drawn above, and which we have seen to be implied in the Anglican Liturgy, between eating the Body of Christ Sacramentally (which all Communicants do) and being Spiritually partakers of Him (which is the portion only of faithful Communicants). In this they followed the general teaching of the ancient Fathers,<sup>2</sup> and particularly of S. Augustine, whose doctrine is fairly repre-

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Bishop Fox, of Hereford, quoted at length in SARAVIA, *Treatise on the Holy Eucharist*, p. 129. Œcolampadius agreed with the mature opinion of Bucer, affirming that "he who believeth, even with a dead faith, that Christ the Son of God, and of Mary, hath died for our reconciliation and restoration unto life, and who testifieth that he believeth this by his use of the Sacrament, to that man assuredly the Very Body of Christ is present in the Sacrament."—See SARAVIA, *Treatise on the Holy Eucharist*, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> "The expression 'shall be guilty of the Body and Blood' meaneth this, that just as Judas betrayed Him, and the Jews on their part insulted Him and heaped reproaches and abuse upon Him, so do they do Him dishonour and have Him in scorn, who take His most Holy Body with unclean hands and put It into a polluted and unhallowed mouth."—THEODORET *in 1 Cor. x.* "In what guise wilt thou appear before the tribunal of Christ, who darest to touch the Body of the Lord with unclean hands and lips."—S. CHRYSOSTOM, *Serm. 3 on Ephesians*. It must be admitted that some of the Fathers are not always consistent (see GIBSON, *Thirty-nine Articles*, ii. 671, n. 1); but Bishop FORBES' words are, broadly speaking, true to fact when he says, "If there is any fact in theological history capable of demonstration, I think it is this, that the Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops did teach, alike in Liturgies and in treatises, that in some sense the unworthy Communicants do receive the Body and Blood of Christ to their condemnation."—*Explanation of the Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 583.

sented in the following passage: "Let all this hereunto avail us, dearly beloved, that we eat not the Flesh of Christ and the Blood of Christ only in the Sacrament, a thing which many wicked men also do; but that we eat and drink unto participation of the Spirit, so as to abide in the Lord's Body as members, so as to be quickened by His Spirit and not be offended."<sup>1</sup> With the doctrine thus stated, Cranmer's words seem to be in agreement when he writes: "I say that the same visible and palpable Flesh, that for us was crucified, and appeared after His Resurrection . . . that self-same Body . . . I say, is eaten of Christian people at His Holy Supper. . . . For the diversity is not in the Body, but in the eating thereof, no man eating it carnally; but the good eating it both Sacramentally and Spiritually, and the evil only Sacramentally, that is, figuratively."<sup>2</sup> Ridley in the disputation at Oxford expressly affirmed his agreement with S. Augustine. "Evil men," said he, "do eat the very true and natural Body of Christ Sacramentally, and no further; as S. Augustine saith. But good men do eat the very true Body both Sacramentally, and Spiritually by grace."<sup>3</sup> With this view the language of Article xxix. (viz. "the wicked . . . are in no wise partakers of Christ") is, when interpreted in its strict and proper sense, quite consistent.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, it must be owned that, taken in conjunction with the title prefixed to it,<sup>5</sup> the Article

<sup>1</sup> *In Jo. Tract.*, xxvii. 11. Similarly in *Serm.* lxxi. 17 S. AUGUSTINE distinguishes the different modes in which the good and bad eat the Flesh of Christ and drink His Blood. S. Augustine is not always consistent with himself (as is shown by GORE, *Dissertations on Subjects connected with the Incarnation*, p. 234, footnote), but it would be true to say that the passage quoted above represented his general teaching. See FORBES, *Thirty-nine Articles*, pp. 583-7, and SARAVIA, *Treatise on the Holy Eucharist*, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *On the Lord's Supper*, pp. 224, 225 (ed. Parker Society).

<sup>3</sup> *Ridley's Works*, p. 246 (ed. Parker Society).

<sup>4</sup> MACLEAR (*Introduction to the Articles*, p. 349) draws attention to the importance of the precise phraseology of the twenty-ninth Article and remarks, "It is not said that the wicked are not partakers of the Body and Blood of Christ."

<sup>5</sup> Viz. "Of the wicked, which do not eat the Body of Christ."

appears to deny that the wicked in any sense eat the Body of Christ, and on this account the Article met with great opposition when it was first proposed to insert it at the Elizabethan revision of the Articles in 1563. Bishop Guest of Rochester strongly objected to it, writing to Cecil with reference to it: "If this Article be confirmed and authorised by the Queen's grace it will cause much business, because it is quite contrary to the Scripture and to the doctrine of the Fathers."<sup>1</sup> In the same letter he continues: "It is not said, if thou be a good or a faithful man, take eat this is My Body, but simply without any such condition, take eat this is My Body. So that to all men which be of the Church and of the profession of Christ, whether they be good or bad, faithful or unfaithful (for to them only Christ spoke these words, take eat this is My Body, and not to the Jew, Turk, miscreant beast or bird),<sup>2</sup> Christ's Body is given and they do receive It. That is the cause that Paul saith whosoever shall eat of this Bread and drink of the Cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, for he that eateth or drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh his own damnation, because he maketh no difference of the Lord's Body. Note well these words 'The Lord's Body.' It is not here said the sign or sacrament of the Lord's Body, nor the grace or fruit of the Lord's Body, nor the memory of the Lord's Passion, but plainly the Lord's Body, to teach us that the evil men of the Church do receive Christ's Body."<sup>3</sup> In spite of his strong

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Bishop Guest to Cecil, Lord Burleigh, May, 1571. The document is given *in extenso* by PERRY, *Declaration on Kneeling*, pp. 195 *et seqq.* See also HODGES, *Bishop Guest and Articles XXVIII. and XXIX.*, pp. 24-7.

<sup>2</sup> Those who held materialistic views as to the nature of the Real Presence were obliged either to admit that animals received the Body of Christ, or to resort to strange expedients in explaining what did actually happen in cases when animals by accident devoured the consecrated Bread. The Lutheran Brenz held that if the consecrated Species were eaten by a mouse, the mouse would have eaten the true Body of Christ. See BEARD, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 138, footnote. It will be noted that Guest definitely rejects any such opinion.

<sup>3</sup> PERRY, *Declaration on Kneeling*, p. 200.

opposition to it, thus expressed to Cecil, it appears that Bishop Guest signed Article xxix. when it was again brought forward in 1571;<sup>1</sup> and the Article was afterwards accepted by others who held like views with him, by such men, *e.g.*, as Bernard Gilpin and Adrian Saravia. We can only conclude from this that we are justified in understanding the expression "eat the Body of Christ," in the title of Article xxix., to refer to the reception, not of the *res* only (which the wicked do receive Sacramentally), but of the *res* together with the *virtus* of the Sacrament.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See facsimile of episcopal signatures in LAMB, *Historical Account of the Articles*.

<sup>2</sup> So in S. John vi. the phrase "eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood" should be understood to refer to the reception of the *virtus* and not the *res* alone of the Sacrament. In this sense S. AUGUSTINE (*Serm.* xi.) explains our Lord's language in S. John vi. Similarly, SARAIVA says: "The Lord in that place is not speaking about Sacramental eating, but about Spiritual eating, which hath to do with the *virtue* of the Sacrament."—*Treatise on the Holy Eucharist*, p. 91. See further PUSEY, *On the Real Presence*, p. 255.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE CHURCH AS MINISTER OF DISCIPLINE

THE Church as an institution working through, for, and amongst men is perfectly adapted to man's needs, and deals with all sides of his complex nature. In virtue of the Divine Truth which she bears, and by reason of the Divine Commission entrusted to her, she claims ability to furnish satisfaction for man's manifold capacities, and authority to regulate and direct all departments of his many-sided activity. Guided by the Spirit into all the truth,<sup>1</sup> she claims, as Preacher of Doctrine,<sup>2</sup> to remove from the intellect the despair of truth, a step which must ever be the necessary preliminary to healthy mental activity. As Minister of the Sacraments<sup>3</sup>—the Divinely appointed channels of grace—she claims to satisfy with the fulness of God<sup>4</sup> the spirit of man which feels after Him, and which nothing short of a life of Communion with Him can ever really satisfy. Then, further, since a healthy condition of mind and spirit is exhibited in right action, the Church as Minister of Discipline claims to guide and control the practical daily life of man in the body. It is this last function of the Church—the due administration of Discipline—which will form the subject of the present chapter.

If we are right in concluding that Christ intended His Church to be a visible Society, then it is only reasonable and natural that the Church should have its rules for the regulation of the lives of its members and its proper discipline. As an organised Society it must have orderly government and an inherent

<sup>1</sup> S. John xvi. 13.

<sup>2</sup> See above, chap. viii.

<sup>3</sup> See above, chap. ix.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. iii. 19.

power to deal with members who offend against its rules, for all societies are justified in putting discipline in force, and, in the last resort, in excluding from their fellowship such as may repudiate the conditions of membership. That our Lord recognised this principle and anticipated its exercise in the fellowship of His followers is clear from His words on the subject of the right treatment of offenders: "If thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them tell it unto the Church: and if he refuse to hear the Church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican."<sup>1</sup>

Christians, in this life, are in a state of probation. In Baptism we are justified, *i.e.* we are brought into a right relation with God, and enter upon a state of life wherein we may do things pleasing in His sight;<sup>2</sup> the merits of Christ's Atonement are individually appropriated;<sup>3</sup> the barrier of sin, which separates man from God,<sup>4</sup> is removed, for the guilt of Original Sin is done away and the punishment due to it is, for Christ's sake, remitted. While Baptism thus removes all condemnation on account of Original Sin,<sup>5</sup> it does not at the same time remove the weakness and proneness to sin which is the effect of the Fall upon human nature, so that the baptized are not free from what S. Paul calls *φρόνημα σαρκὸς*<sup>6</sup>—a directing of the thoughts and intents of the heart towards the interests of the flesh.<sup>7</sup> There remains, even in the regenerate, the lusting of the flesh against the Spirit, a conflict and rebellion of the lower against the

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 15-17.

<sup>2</sup> "Good works, which . . . follow after justification . . . are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ."—Art. xii.

<sup>3</sup> See above, chap. x., p. 201.

<sup>4</sup> Isa. lix. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. viii. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. viii. 4-7.

<sup>7</sup> See the author's *Thirty-nine Articles and the Age of the Reformation*, pp. 76, 77.



higher within us.<sup>1</sup> Baptism does not do away with the concupiscence and proneness to sin which are characteristic of fallen human nature, but it introduces men to a state of grace wherein power is bestowed that they may be able to overcome these. As a very necessary help to this end the Church sets before all her members the discipline of fasting and self-denial.

That fasting ranks as a Christian duty must be clear to every unprejudiced reader of the New Testament. It may be freely admitted that it is not very frequently referred to in the Canonical books, and we may leave out of consideration those passages where, owing to variant readings in the MSS., the true reading of the Greek text is a matter of some uncertainty.<sup>2</sup> Still there remains absolutely undoubted the fact that our Lord Himself set the example of fasting,<sup>3</sup> and to His example, Who is our pattern in all things, the Church appeals in setting the duty before her children.<sup>4</sup>

The theory that fasting is a ceremonial institution of the Old Law which the Christian is above, and which he can afford to do without, is a view which cannot be reconciled with the express teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. In that discourse the Lord treats of three fundamental practices of the religious life, and with regard to each one of them His directions are characterised by a remarkable identity of expression: "when thou doest alms,"<sup>5</sup> . . . "when thou prayest,"<sup>6</sup> . . . "when thou fastest."<sup>7</sup> . . . In view of these words of the

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 7 ; Gal. v. 16, 17. "This infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated."—Art. ix.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xvii. 21 ; S. Mark ix. 29 ; 1 Cor. vii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. iv. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Collect for the First Sunday in Lent.

<sup>5</sup> S. Matt. vi. 2, 3.

<sup>6</sup> S. Matt. vi. 5-7.

<sup>7</sup> S. Matt. vi. 16, 17. HOOKER remarks on this passage: "Our Lord and Saviour would not teach the manner of doing, much less propose a reward for doing that which were not both holy and acceptable in God's sight."—*Ecclesiastical Polity*, V. lxxii. 4. JOHN WESLEY, alluding to neglect of fasting, says (in 1789): "What excuse can there be for this? I do not say for those that call themselves members of the Church of England; but for any who profess to believe the Scripture to be the Word

Divine Speaker, putting the three practices on the same level, it is not easy to understand how some can say that as regards the first two of these duties—prayer and almsgiving—no doubt the obligation to observe them still lies upon us, but that it is foreign to the spirit of the Gospel to perform the third.

While the duty of fasting and self-denial is thus, in the first place, commended by the Master both in word and deed, it is further forced upon our attention as bearing the imprimatur of the consentient practice of the Church as a whole from the very earliest age. In Apostolic times, when the Church went forth to her work in all the fresh fervour of Pentecostal inspiration, fasting appears as a frequent accompaniment of prayer and religious service. It was while the Christians at Antioch fasted and ministered to the Lord that the Holy Ghost said, "Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," and it was after further fasting, with prayer, that "they laid their hands on them and sent them away."<sup>1</sup> It is again incidentally noted by the historian of the Acts of the Apostles in connexion with the appointment of presbyters by SS. Paul and Barnabas in the Churches of Asia Minor which they had founded, that "when they had prayed with fasting they commended them to the Lord on Whom they had believed."<sup>2</sup>

Following the example and precept of Christ, the custom of the Primitive Church and her own immemorial tradition, the whole Church to-day sets aside certain stated days and seasons to be observed with fasting or abstinence. At the Reformation the Anglican Church, consistently with her appeal to Primitive custom as a guide, deliberately retained the traditional days and seasons of fasting hallowed by time-honoured observance in the West.<sup>3</sup> It was, moreover, provided by a rubric after the Nicene Creed in the Communion Office, and by Canon 64 of

of God ; since according to this, the man that never fasts is no more in the way to Heaven, than the man that never prays."—*Sermons* (10th ed.), ii. 522.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xiii. 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xiv. 23.

<sup>3</sup> See in the Prayer Book the "Table of the Vigils, Fasts, and Days of Abstinence to be observed in the year."

1604, that the impending occurrence of these fasting-days should be duly announced at the Eucharist on the Lord's Day by the clergy to the people. In the Second Book of Homilies there is a sermon entitled "Of good works: and first of fasting." This Homily well and emphatically lays down that fasting is a means, not an end in itself, affirming that "when it respecteth a good end, it is a good work," and that thus duly used "with prayer it is of great efficacy, and weigheth much with God." The rule of the Church as set forth in the Prayer Book is clear, and accordingly for a loyal Churchman, just as for a humble Christian who strives to follow the example and carry out the teaching of Christ, the duty of practising fasting and self-denial is a plain and obvious one.

The reason of a system of fasting and self-denial is primarily disciplinary; it is a precautionary measure suggested by prudence in order that the members of the Church may be fortified and on their guard against lapse through the weakness of the flesh, which inclines men to yield to temptation and hinders the efficacy of their prayers. The meaning of the Church's discipline of self-denial is altogether misrepresented by such as are sometimes found to speak of it as though it were a relic of superstition, or an indication of a Pharisaic temper. It may be that some who practise fasting have been injudicious and have made it an end in itself, but such abuse does not take away the proper use of it as a means to an end, as a means whereby men may be strengthened against temptation and their prayers rendered more fervent and spiritual. So far from being anything to be proud of, or a matter to be paraded,<sup>1</sup> fasting should be looked upon rather as a humiliating necessity, a precautionary measure in no way meritorious to the individual who uses it. When we realise the actual conditions of Christian life in the world, the prudence of self-discipline as a precaution becomes evident. S. Paul keenly realised, and in his Epistles graphically sets forth, the stress of the Christian's life, comparing it now to a

<sup>1</sup> See our Lord's especial caution on this head (S. Matt. vi. 16).

race, wherein if we would not miss the goal there is need of continual and sustained effort together with careful self-discipline analogous to the athlete's training,<sup>1</sup> and again likening it to a contest in the arena, wherein we must have a plan of attack and defence, and, if we are to be successful, each blow must tell.<sup>2</sup> Now in earthly warfare the foe most to be feared is the traitor within the gates, and the same holds good of the Christian's spiritual struggle. As has been shown above,<sup>3</sup> the result of the Fall for human nature in general has been an inclination of the desires of the flesh to evil, the introduction of an element of discord within, so that against the law of our mind which consents to the Law of God, and approves the things that are excellent, we find another law in our members warring against it and tending to bring us into captivity to the law of sin.<sup>4</sup> It is in this direction especially that effort must be concentrated; we must not let sin reign in our mortal body that we should obey it in the lusts thereof;<sup>5</sup> in our own case, as in that of the Apostle S. Paul, the lower within us must, through mortification and self-denial, be bruised, beaten down, brought into subjection, and made a slave to the higher.<sup>6</sup> To sum up, then, if we are to live the higher life and not be swayed by the motions of the flesh, we shall find it necessary, because of the *φρόνημα σαρκὸς*, to be strict with ourselves; we must have discipline. All are found to assent to this in general terms, but the important thing is that Christians should learn to act upon it and apply it to their own lives, and it is in order that they may practise it, and thereby cultivate a habit of self-control, that definite days and seasons for fasting are appointed for observance by the Church. At such times we are bidden to deny ourselves in meat or drink, or other indulgences of the flesh, things trivial and in themselves lawful, for it is obvious that even the least acts of self-denial, faithfully carried out, may be of the greatest value in helping us to acquire the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 24-6.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 26.<sup>3</sup> See p. 299.<sup>4</sup> See S. Paul's description of this inward struggle (Rom. vii. 7-23).<sup>5</sup> Rom. vi. 12.<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 27.

necessary habit of self-control. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.<sup>1</sup> The man who in small things and in things indifferent has by practice acquired the habit of commanding himself, who can say to himself, "I will do this," or, "I will not do that," and abide by his decision, this is the man who in the day of trial will have his will under command, and in the face of strong temptation will be able to resist the Adversary of souls and put him to flight. The primary object of fasting is thus disciplinary that the Christian may be in training for his spiritual contest, that he may cultivate self-control and "subdue the flesh to the spirit."<sup>2</sup>

But we must go further than this. The subduing of the flesh to the spirit, which is the immediate purpose and outcome of the discipline of self-denial, is but intended as a preparatory step that we may be the better fitted for spiritual activity, and the better disposed for the reception of spiritual blessings. This is brought out in the Collect for the First Sunday in Lent where we pray, "Give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to the spirit, *we may ever obey Thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness.*" Fasting undertaken in this spirit trains us in the grace of detachment, helps to keep us true to the command, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,"<sup>3</sup> and braces us for spiritual work. Many of the noteworthy fasts recorded in Holy Scripture were of the nature of preparation for the undertaking of some Divine Commission, or for the reception of some special Divine Revelation. It was during a fast of forty days and forty nights, alone upon the Mount of God, that Moses received the Law.<sup>4</sup> Again, after a similar fast of

<sup>1</sup> S. Luke xvi. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Collect for the First Sunday in Lent. Cf. *Epistle to Diognetus*, cap. vi. : "When hardly treated in the matter of meats and drinks, the soul is improved."

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. vi. 33. Note also in this connexion the saying attributed to our Lord in the recently discovered *Sayings of Jesus*: "Except ye fast from the world, ye shall in no wise find the Kingdom of God."

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xxiv. 18.

forty days and forty nights, Elijah at Horeb heard the "still small voice" which conveyed to him the Divine message and commission.<sup>1</sup> A fast of three weeks formed Daniel's preparation for the reception through visions of revelations concerning the latter days and the advent of the Messiah.<sup>2</sup> Turning to the New Testament we have the example of S. John Baptist, whose mission it was to prepare men spiritually for the coming of the Lord, and who both himself practised,<sup>3</sup> and taught his disciples to practise,<sup>4</sup> fasting, and self-denial. Finally, we may note that our Lord's own fast of forty days and forty nights was undertaken at the impulse of the Spirit<sup>5</sup> as a preparation for the work of His public ministry which lay before Him.

In accordance with the principle which underlies these well-known fasts of Scripture which we have mentioned, the fasts appointed for observance in the Church of Christ are uniformly of a preparatory character. As disposing man for the reception of spiritual blessing, fasting was very early enjoined in the Church as an important part of the preparation of candidates for Baptism. In the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* we find the injunction given. "Before the Baptism let the baptizer and the baptized fast, and whatever others can; but the baptized thou shalt command to fast for one or two days before."<sup>6</sup> Again, Justin Martyr, writing in the first half of the second century, refers to fasting as part of the regular preparation for reception of the Sacrament. "As many as are persuaded and believe that the things taught and spoken by us are true, and promise to be able to live accordingly, are taught to pray and to entreat God with fasting for the remission of their past sins, we at the same time praying and fasting with them. Then they are brought by us to a place where there is water, and are regenerated."<sup>7</sup> Similarly the exercise of fasting, together with prayer, is, by the rule of

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xix. 8-18.

<sup>2</sup> Dan. x. 3.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. iii. 4; S. Luke i. 15; vii. 33.

<sup>4</sup> S. Matt. ix. 14; S. Mark ii. 18; S. Luke v. 33.

<sup>5</sup> S. Matt. iv. 1, 2; S. Mark i. 12, 13.

<sup>6</sup> *Didache*, cap. vii.

<sup>7</sup> *Apology*, i cap. 61.



the Church, still urged upon adult candidates for Baptism.<sup>1</sup> Just as, from a period at least as early as the second century, fasting has commended itself to the sense of Christians generally as a due preparation that men may worthily receive the spiritual grace of the Sacrament of Baptism, so also a very general instinct in the Church has regarded it as disposing men to approach the other great Sacrament—the Holy Eucharist—with becoming reverence, humility, and detachment from the things of sense. The universal observance of the Primitive rule of fasting before communicating is testified to by S. Augustine in the year 400 A.D., when he says in his letter to Januarius that “it has seemed good to the Holy Ghost that in honour of so great a Sacrament, the Body of the Lord should enter the mouth of a Christian before other food; and it is for this reason that the custom referred to is observed throughout the whole world.” The same Father also states it as his opinion that the institution of the fast before Communion was due to the Apostle S. Paul, for in the same letter to Januarius, after quoting the words of S. Paul, “the rest will I set in order when I come,”<sup>2</sup> he adds, “whence we are given to understand that the observance (viz. of the fast before Communion) which is varied by no diversity of customs was one of the things set in order by the Apostle in person.”<sup>3</sup> Apart from any question as to the authority or opinions of S. Augustine himself, his words plainly testify that, as a matter of history, at the close of the fourth century the custom of fasting Communion was both universal and immemorial in the Church of Christ. It is not necessary for our present purpose to go through in detail the great mass of patristic testimony to the prevalence of the fast before Communion in early times, but we may refer to Dr. Döllinger’s words on this point: <sup>4</sup> “The custom,” he writes, “of receiving the Eucharist fasting seems to have arisen among the people

<sup>1</sup> See in the Prayer Book the first rubric prefixed to *The Ministration of Baptism to such as are of Riper Years*.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 34.

<sup>3</sup> *Epistle to Januarius*, cap. vi.

<sup>4</sup> *History of the Church* (trans. Cox), ii. 322.

without any express law, and to have sprung from respect to the sacred banquet of the Lord. Tertullian mentions this practice,<sup>1</sup> and so general had it become in the fourth century that the enemies of S. John Chrysostom adduced this, among other accusations, that he had admitted persons who were not fasting to Communion."<sup>2</sup> Without multiplying quotations from the Fathers we may draw attention to a matter in this connexion which has been treated with admirable clearness by the Rev. F. W. Puller,<sup>3</sup> who has shown that for twelve hundred years it was the rule of the Church that the hour for celebrating the Eucharist should vary according to the character of the day. On Sundays and Festivals it was the rule to celebrate it at an early hour;<sup>4</sup> on the weekly fast-days (viz. Wednesday and Friday) it was celebrated in the afternoon, and during Lent so as to conclude at nightfall. In other words, the hour for celebrating the Eucharist, by this rule, varies according to the hour when it is permissible to take food on the day in question, and the Eucharist was never allowed at a late hour on Sundays or Festivals on the ground that a late Communion would involve a long and rigid fast, and the Church refused to permit a Sunday or a Festival to be turned into a fasting-day. No precise reference was made by the Anglican Reformers of the sixteenth century in any authoritative formulary to the rule of fasting Communion, but the incidental testimony of the Canons of 1604 should not be

<sup>1</sup> *Ad Uxorem*, ii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> S. CHRYSOSTOM repudiated the accusation in the well-known words: "If I did this may my name be wiped out of the roll of Bishops, and not be written in the book of the Orthodox Faith; for if I did this Christ shall cast me out of His Kingdom."—*Epistle* cxxv. In another place he says: "Thou, before thou hast partaken, fastest, that in a certain way thou mayest appear worthy of the Communion."—*Homily* xxvii.

<sup>3</sup> *Concerning the Fast before Communion*, pp. 12 *et seqq.*

<sup>4</sup> PLINY states in his *Letter to Trajan* that the Christians "were accustomed to assemble on a fixed day *before it was light*, and bind themselves by a *sacramentum* not to commit any wickedness." TERTULLIAN says: "The Sacrament of the Eucharist administered by the Lord at the time of supper, we receive at our meetings before daybreak."—*De Corona*, iii.

passed over. The Canonical hour for Matrimony, as then defined, is "between the hours of eight and twelve in the forenoon."<sup>1</sup> Now the reason for this limitation of the solemnisation of Matrimony to the forenoon is that it was contemplated that a celebration of the Eucharist would accompany the ceremony, in accordance with the closing rubric of the Marriage Office,<sup>2</sup> and it was assumed that the wedding party would be keeping fast until the conclusion of the service. Agreeably to this we find the term breakfast, by time-honoured custom, applied to the wedding feast.<sup>3</sup>

In accordance with this principle—viz. that fasting is a preparation for entrance upon spiritual work, or the undertaking of a commission from God, and induces a right disposition for the reception of spiritual blessing—it has always been the Church's custom to observe a fast in connexion with the Ordination of her Ministers. There is more than one reference to a fast of this kind in the New Testament Scriptures. It is first alluded to in the account of the ordination and mission of SS. Paul and Barnabas,<sup>4</sup> and from the recurrence of the practice, as recorded by the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, when these same Apostles themselves appointed presbyters in newly founded churches,<sup>5</sup> it may be legitimately inferred that SS. Paul and Barnabas regarded it as an established rule of the Church that the actions of prayer and fasting should jointly serve as a preparation of the Christian community for the solemn work of appointing men to the

<sup>1</sup> *Canons* 62 and 102.

<sup>2</sup> Viz. "It is convenient that the new-married persons should receive the Holy Communion at the time of their marriage." The concluding clause of this rubric as it now stands—"or at the first opportunity after their marriage"—was not in existence when the Canons were formulated, being added at the last revision of the Prayer Book in 1661.

<sup>3</sup> It was only after the custom of Communion at Marriage had to a great extent fallen into disuse that the Canonical time for the Solemnisation of Matrimony was extended to three o'clock in the afternoon, a supplementary amendment of Canons 62 and 102 to this effect being promulgated by Royal License in 1887.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xiii. 2, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Acts xiv. 23.

exercise of spiritual functions. The Apostolic example in the matter has been consistently followed by the Church as a whole, and we still observe our Ember-days before those four seasons of the year when it is customary for the Bishops to hold their Ordinations.

In the same way the other fasting-days which the Church calls us to observe are clearly intended to be preparatory in their nature. The weekly fast of Friday is undertaken in view of the Divine Worship we are to engage in on the ensuing Lord's Day, and of the Eucharist which forms the central feature of that worship. The Vigils are preparations for the keeping of the commemorations of the Saints of God that we may find grace to follow in their steps, and the great annual fast of Lent is specially set apart to prepare us for Easter, that when the Festival of the Resurrection comes we may be the better disposed to respond to the call—"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth : For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that some of the well-known fasts recorded in the Bible were undertaken by way of preparation for spiritual activity and as disposing men for the reception of blessings or revelations from God ; but there is another purpose and use of fasting which is also prominent in the Scripture narrative, where we read several times of fasts that were kept both by individuals and by whole communities as a fitting and natural expression of sorrow for sin. In affairs of this life the neglect to take food at usual times is a spontaneous and instinctive expression of grief. When lamenting the death of someone very dear, or when mourning through some great loss or disappointment, men will naturally not be inclined for eating or drinking, and if a man under such circumstances were to go on eating and drinking as usual, people might very reasonably remark that such a one could not feel his loss

<sup>1</sup> Col. iii. 1-3. The opening words of the *Epistle for Easter Day*.

or disappointment keenly. It is recorded that Ahab manifested his grief and chagrin at not being able to secure Naboth's vineyard by turning away his face and refusing to eat bread.<sup>1</sup> Nehemiah, as a loyal son of Jerusalem, instinctively showed his grief for the desolation of his mother-city by refusing to take food.<sup>2</sup> Now this same action of fasting, which is for the disappointed man of the world, or for the sorrowing patriot, a natural expression of grief, is for the religious man a fitting token of what must be his deepest sorrow—his sorrow for sin against God. "Here then," writes John Wesley, "is the natural ground of fasting. One who is under deep affliction, overwhelmed with sorrow for sin, and a strong apprehension of the wrath of God, would without any rule, without knowing or considering whether it was a command of God or not, forget to eat his bread, abstain not only from pleasant, but even from needful food."<sup>3</sup> Bodily self-denial is thus a tangible proof that penitence is real. The prophet Joel tells of a solemn fast proclaimed in Jerusalem by Divine command as a visible token of hearts that were rent by reason of the sins of the community against the Lord,<sup>4</sup> and at Nineveh, upon the preaching of Jonah, a solemn general fast was observed by Royal proclamation, that the repentance of the city might not be in word only, but that it might be shown by unmistakable signs that it was a genuine and heartfelt sorrow.<sup>5</sup> Fasting is in this way an evidence of penitence, and, more than this, is intended to foster a penitential spirit in them that use it, for by it men express their purpose to forsake those sins for which they thus afflict themselves. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen," says the Lord by the prophet Isaiah, "to loose the bands of wickedness."<sup>6</sup> "He that

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xxi. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Neh i. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Wesley's Works* (Pine, Bristol, 1773), ii. 256.

<sup>4</sup> Joel ii. 12, 13.

<sup>5</sup> Jonah iii. 5-9.

<sup>6</sup> Isa. lviii. 6. See also the *Shepherd* of HERMAS, Sim. V. iii.: "This fasting, if the commandments of the Lord are kept, is very good. This then is the way that thou shalt keep this fast. First of all, keep thyself from every evil word and every evil desire, and purify thy heart from

washeth himself after the touching of a dead body, if he touch it again, what availeth his washing? So is it with a man that fasteth for his sins, and goeth again and doeth the same; who will hear his prayer? or what doth his humbling profit him?"<sup>1</sup>

Yet again, a fast is acceptable to God when prompted by a spirit of self-sacrifice, when men deny themselves in order that out of their abundance they may minister to the necessities of others less fortunate than they. The fast that God approves is, as Scripture teaches, "to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; when thou seest the naked that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh."<sup>2</sup> There could be no motive of fasting more thoroughly in accord with the Christian spirit than this of self-denial for the sake of others. In primitive times voluntary fasts were often undertaken by Christians that they might have to bestow upon them that lacked the necessities of life. The philosopher Aristides refers to the practice as characteristic of the early Christians, alleging that "if there is among them a man that is poor or needy, and they have not an abundance of necessities, they fast two or three days that they may supply the needy with their necessary food."<sup>3</sup> Further, in the *Shepherd* of Hermas directions are given with respect to fasting as follows: "Thus shalt thou do. Having fulfilled what is written, on that day on which thou fastest thou shalt taste nothing but bread and water; and from thy meats, which thou wouldest have eaten, thou shalt reckon up the amount of that day's expenditure, which thou wouldest have incurred, and shalt give it to a widow, or an orphan, or to one in want, and so shalt thou humble thy soul, that he that hath received from thy humiliation may satisfy his own soul, and may pray for thee to the Lord. If then thou shalt so accomplish this fast, as I have commanded thee, thy sacrifice shall be acceptable in the sight of God, and this fasting shall be recorded; and the service so performed is

all the vanities of this world. If thou keep these things, this fast shall be perfect for thee."

<sup>1</sup> Eccclus. xxxiv. 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. lviii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Apology of Aristides*, cap. xv.



beautiful and joyous and acceptable to the Lord.”<sup>1</sup> Sympathy for the poor and needy and liberality towards them are thus the outcome of fasting observed in a truly Christian spirit, so that, side by side with its primary object of self-discipline, the practice helps us to avoid a self-complacent and self-centred life such as that of Dives in the Gospel, of whom it is written that he “fared sumptuously every day,”<sup>2</sup> yet ignored the poor man at his gate. In the Church of God we are taught so to improve our fast—

“That every man may revel at his door,  
Not in his parlour—banqueting the poor.”<sup>3</sup>

As we have already had occasion to state, the Christian in this life is in a state of probation. He is called at Baptism to a condition of warfare, and has to contend both against temptations from without and against the impulses of the lower nature within. He is pledged to fight manfully under the banner of the Cross against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to him as a member of Christ is given the spiritual power of Divine grace that he may be enabled to overcome these. Yet, since man is, throughout this earthly life, in a state of probation, the final issue of the struggle with evil is not, by his incorporation into Christ and by the gift of the Holy Spirit, necessarily assured to the individual. Divine grace is not in its nature irresistible, but room is left for man to exercise his power of choice, the grace of God not superseding human activity, but co-operating with it.<sup>4</sup> A refusal to recognise this takes away from the peculiar beauty and dignity of the service which man as a rational being may render to God. It is by a happy order from which they cannot depart that lower forms of creation continually set forth the glory of the Creator.<sup>5</sup> But with man, whose moral nature is created in the image of God, it is otherwise; his service is Divinely

<sup>1</sup> *Shepherd* of HERMAS, Sim. V. cap iii.

<sup>2</sup> S. Luke xvi. 19.

<sup>3</sup> GEORGE HERBERT, *Lent*.

<sup>4</sup> Thus Art. x. affirms that the grace of God works *with* us when we have a good will.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. xix. 1-4; see also the *Benedicite*.

intended to be the outcome of deliberate choice, a free and willing service rendered in face of difficulties and temptations to God Whom he loves. This being so, the position of privilege in the Church and offers of grace from God put man on his trial, so to speak. For no one is forced to respond to God's advances or to make a just use of privileges, and accordingly offers and advances on God's part inevitably raise the question, Will man respond to these offers and co-operate with the Divine grace bestowed upon him as a member of the Church? It must be recognised, therefore, that for the Christian such a thing as faithlessness to high privilege, or fall from grace given, is possible.<sup>1</sup> The general tenour of Scripture,<sup>2</sup> the figure of warfare under which it so frequently describes the Christian life,<sup>3</sup> the fear and circumspection enjoined upon the members of Christ's Church,<sup>4</sup> and the daily petition for forgiveness in the pattern Prayer—all these testify that the Christian is in this life in a state of trial or probation, in which failure is possible. If further argument were needed, it might be pointed out that the Scriptural teaching corresponds with the actual circumstances of man, who finds himself surrounded by temptations to evil, and retains in greater or less degree a propensity to yield to them; it corresponds no less with the experience of faithful Christians, who not only feel many infirmities, but are conscious of and confess their many failures and shortcomings. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."<sup>5</sup>

All sin is in its nature deadly, since its natural effect is to separate man from God, Who is his true life. Wilful

<sup>1</sup> See Arts. xv. and xvi.

<sup>2</sup> Isolated passages which have been sometimes urged in support of the doctrine of indefectible grace must be explained in accordance with the general tenour of Scripture; *e.g.* the text "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin . . . he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 S. John iii. 9) must not be so understood as to contradict the natural sense of 1 S. John i. 8-10; S. James iii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* Eph. vi. 11-17.

<sup>4</sup> Phil. ii. 12; 1 S. Peter i. 17.

<sup>5</sup> S. John i. 8, 9.

sin deliberately committed on the part of the Christian, who has been regenerated and brought into a happy state of communion with God, is especially grievous, because it is committed to a greater or less extent against light and knowledge, and if persisted in must at last shut man out from the Divine Presence.<sup>1</sup> But though very grievous, though even wilfully committed in spite of warnings received and grace given, it does not follow that sin on the part of the Christian necessarily cuts him off from all hope of pardon or amendment, or that post-Baptismal sin, which is committed after having received the Holy Spirit, is to be taken for that unpardonable sin against Him concerning which Christ delivered so emphatic and terrible a warning.<sup>2</sup> There has been a tendency, at various periods in the Church's history amongst some Christians, to regard the wilful sin of the regenerate as so grave an offence against the indwelling Spirit as to be in its very nature unpardonable.<sup>3</sup> This strict view characterised Montanism<sup>4</sup> in the second century, whose adherents regarded it as their special mission to reform the practical life and discipline of the Church, which latter they conceived should be made much more rigorous than they found it, in view of the supposed near approach of the second Advent, and accordingly in their system Absolution was refused to those who after Baptism had lapsed into grievous sin, and the excommunicate were obliged to remain during their whole life in the "status

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. i. 8, 9.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xii. 31, 32; S. Mark iii. 28-30. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is explained in the Forty-two Articles (1553) as "when a man of malice and stubbornness of mind doth rail upon the truth of God's word manifestly perceived, and being enemy thereunto persecuteth the same."

<sup>3</sup> Scriptural support for this view has sometimes been sought from Heb. vi. 4-6; x. 26-9. See WESTCOTT'S *Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 165.

<sup>4</sup> TERTULLIAN, after quoting Heb. vi. 4 *et seqq.*, and understanding the Epistle to be the work of S. Barnabas, adds that "he who learnt from the Apostles and who taught with the Apostles had no idea of a second repentance being promised by the Apostles to the fornicator and the adulterer."—*De Pudicitia*, cap. xx.

penitentiaë." A like rigid doctrine was taught by the Novatians<sup>1</sup> in the third century, who held that mortal sin after Baptism is unpardonable, and therefore denied Absolution not only to such as apostatised in time of persecution, but to such as had been guilty of any notorious sin. The same tendency towards excessive strictness in ecclesiastical discipline appeared later, at the period of the Reformation, amongst the Anabaptists in Germany and amongst the Brownists in our own country. Against the erroneous ideas of discipline thus propagated the Catholic Church has consistently maintained the position, so well stated in the Anglican Articles, that "not every deadly sin willingly committed after Baptism is sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after Baptism. After we have received the Holy Ghost we may depart from grace given and fall into sin, and by the grace of God we may arise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned which deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent."<sup>2</sup> In taking this merciful attitude towards the penitent sinner the Church is true to the mind of Christ and of His Apostles, as may be gathered from Scripture. S. Peter himself who had received grace to confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God,<sup>3</sup> sinned grievously against light and knowledge when he denied his Lord, yet was received back again upon his repentance by the love of the Master, and was restored to his place in the Apostolic company.<sup>4</sup> That by the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit we are not to understand every wilful post-Baptismal sin may further be shown from the instance of Simon Magus, whose sin might well be thought to approach very nearly to the unpardonable one; yet

<sup>1</sup> In opposing the error of Novatian and his followers, S. CYPRIAN writes: "I wonder that there are some so obstinate as not to think that repentance ought to be allowed to such as have fallen, or to suppose that pardon ought to be denied to penitents, when it is written (in Rev. ii. 5), Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works."—*Epistle* lv. (ed. Goldhorn). <sup>2</sup> Art. xvi.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 17.

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke xxiv. 34; S. John xxi. 15 *et seqq.*

we know that it was not of that awful nature, for the Apostle Peter says even to him whom he declared to be in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, "Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee."<sup>1</sup> Apart from these individual instances the whole drift of the New Testament teaching justifies the Church in keeping open a place of repentance for erring and backsliding Christians. Our Lord taught His disciples to exercise mutual forgiveness, and, while acting in this spirit, to pray for and to expect forgiveness of their own offences from God.<sup>2</sup> He moreover gave to the Apostles, as dispensers of His grace, authority to remit sins,<sup>3</sup> which power of Absolution He solemnly confirmed to them after His Resurrection.<sup>4</sup> Further, that this grace of forgiveness was intended by Christ for the baptized is rendered beyond all doubt by the admonitions and warnings of the Apostles, whose inspired letters abound in exhortations to those who have once known the favour and grace of God that they should repent and amend their lives.<sup>5</sup>

The Christian, then, is not by Regeneration removed from the possibility of falling into grievous sin. Nor by such fall from grace is all hope of mercy precluded. It remains, therefore, that we should indicate the conditions and the means of the restoration of the sinner as they have been laid down and provided in the Church. That the matter may be properly understood it is necessary that we should keep in mind the very serious and far-reaching consequences of wilful sin on the part of the Christian. It is of the essence of sin that it alienates the soul from God,<sup>6</sup> with the result that life's true end is obscured or lost sight of, and it is lived otherwise than God intends it should be; the law of man's being is thus violated,<sup>7</sup> and a disturbance of his whole nature

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18.

<sup>4</sup> S. John xx. 21-3.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. Rom. xi. 23; 2 Cor. ii. 6-8; Gal. vi. 1; 1 S. John ii. 1, 2.

<sup>6</sup> Gen. iv. 14; Isa. lix. 2. See AUBREY MOORE, *Some Aspects of Sin*, p. 67.

<sup>7</sup> 1 S. John iii. 4.

induced.<sup>1</sup> Further, in the case of the Christian, mortal sin cuts the soul off from union with Christ, who is the source of all spiritual power. To abide in the Vine is a necessary condition of fruitfulness in the branches,<sup>2</sup> but wilful sin, by raising a barrier between the soul and Christ, the source of grace, stops the flow of spiritual life from the Vine to the particular faulty branch. Such being the consequences of sin, the Divine forgiveness, if it is to meet the case of man, must be much more than a simple declaration of pardon of the fault, or remission of the penalty incurred thereby. If the remission of sins offered to men in the Church were indeed no more than this, the objection frequently urged against the Christian doctrine of forgiveness, that it leads men to make light of sin, might hold good.<sup>3</sup> In the popular conception forgiveness is too often viewed as a commercial transaction, or as a forensic fiction; but over against such misconceptions there stands in clear contrast the Evangelical idea of the Divine Absolution as carrying with it a cleansing and renewing of the whole life. Forgiveness is thus prospective as well as retrospective, and from the idea of pardon we ought not to separate the idea of grace;<sup>4</sup> with Absolution of the penitent God gives "His Holy Spirit that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy." To pronounce sin remitted and at the same time leave man as He found him would be no real blessing for God to bestow. Since by sin the law of our life has been broken, our nature needs to be brought back again and placed beneath its true and proper law, when it has been loosed by absolution from bondage to evil; again, since by sin the soul has been cut off from Christ, it needs to be re-united to Him. The Divine Absolution accordingly

<sup>1</sup> Hence the constant association in Scripture of sin and disease. Cf. *e.g.* Ps. xli. 4.      <sup>2</sup> S. John xv. 4-6.

<sup>3</sup> S. AUGUSTINE (*Serm.* 352) alludes to the taunt of the opponents of Christianity in his time: "You make men to sin when you promise them pardon upon doing Penance." The same objection is still made.

<sup>4</sup> See the Sermon on "Forgiveness of Sins" in AUBREY MOORE'S *From Advent to Advent*.



is much more than a declaration of God's mercy, or a simple announcement that He on His part will remember the sin no more; when God pardons He cleanses, heals, and restores. His forgiveness carries with it a restoration to the soul of the Baptismal life forfeited through sin, and re-endues it with the distinctively Christian powers and privileges which by nature it cannot have,<sup>1</sup> and which make it possible for it to live the supernatural life pleasing to God through union with His well-beloved Son.

Having made clear the nature of the grace of forgiveness bestowed upon the erring members of the Church, we come next to consider the method of its bestowal; and first we will take the subjective conditions required in the recipient. Since it is a question of restoration to the state of grace entered on at Baptism, but from which the individual has fallen through wilful sin, it is natural and necessary that the disposition required in man should be the same when he is being prepared for re-entrance upon Baptismal life and privileges as when he first entered upon the Christian state.

The first requisite, accordingly, is repentance, or sorrow for sin committed. A true repentance includes:—

(i) *Contrition*. True repentance is founded on the motive of love, and implies sorrow for sins for this reason above all others—because they have been committed against the love of God. It is not enough that we should be conscious that by sin we have violated the eternal law of right, or that we should be sorrowful only through fear of the penal consequences, material or spiritual, in this world or the next, to which we may have rendered ourselves liable. This inferior kind of sorrow, springing from fear rather than love, is called by Theologians *attrition*, and though it is obviously not the highest type of sorrow, it may, nevertheless, often form a turning point in the course of a sinner and lead on to a true repentance. That a godly sorrow may begin with a less perfect form of sorrow is taught us in the Parable of the

<sup>1</sup> See the opening address in the *Baptismal Office*.

Prodigal Son. In his case there came first the thought of his own interest and advantage,<sup>1</sup> induced by contrast of the wretchedness to which his folly had brought him with the happiness which might have been his. Next came the overwhelming consideration of the fear of death.<sup>2</sup> It may be quite true that self-interest and fear are not in themselves very lofty motives, yet in the experience of the Prodigal they proved their usefulness, since they led him to take the first steps towards his Father's home. Fear and self-interest impelled him to stay his downward course, to break with sin, and say, "I will arise and go."<sup>3</sup> But where or to whom should he go? To the Father; and with the thought of the Father's love the Prodigal's sorrow becomes godly sorrow: whereas otherwise it might have been merely remorse it now becomes repentance, and all other thoughts are lost in this one of the Father Whom he had offended. "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee."<sup>4</sup> This same mark of godly sorrow distinguishes all true penitents of Holy Scripture. To refer to one chief example: King David, when convicted of his grievous sin in the matter of Bathsheba, cries to God, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned."<sup>5</sup> Not that the royal penitent intended by these words to deny that he had erred grievously against his neighbour in committing adultery and murder, but at the moment of conviction of sin there comes to the sinner the, for the time, all-absorbing thought of the outraged love of God. On the other hand, it is just this acknowledgment of sin as an offence against God which we miss in the case of Judas Iscariot. Some parts of repentance Judas is represented in the Gospels as having performed. He confessed that he had done amiss, saying, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood."<sup>6</sup> He had even the courage, and we can imagine what an effort it must have cost his covetous nature, to make restitution; he brought again the thirty pieces of

<sup>1</sup> "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare!" (S. Luke xv. 17).

<sup>2</sup> "I perish with hunger!" (S. Luke xv. 17). <sup>3</sup> S. Luke xv. 18.

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke xv. 18, 21.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. li. 4.

<sup>6</sup> S. Matt. xxvii. 4.

silver to the chief priests and elders.<sup>1</sup> Yet the remorse of Judas was no saving repentance, for he departed, and went and hanged himself.<sup>2</sup> The groundwork of true repentance is contrition, by which we mean hatred of sin springing from love of God. The penitent sees in the Passion and Death of Christ the work of his sin, and the result is contrition, a breaking of the heart in the thought that he has rejected and trampled upon the infinite tenderness and love of the Father as set forth through the Son.

(ii) From a genuine sorrow for sin there naturally arises a readiness and a desire to *confess* it. After the Prodigal had come to himself he said, "I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto Him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee."<sup>3</sup> We instinctively look for confession of fault or error on the part of those who may have done us an injury or offended us in any way, and we often demand such confession as a necessary preliminary to pardon of the fault. Parents, in the training of their children, regularly act upon this principle. That in thus doing we are prompted by a right and just feeling is plainly taught in Scripture; S. John, for example, shows us that the Divine forgiveness is conditional upon our acknowledgment of our own fault: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."<sup>4</sup> Confession of the fault committed as a sign of godly sorrow is set forth throughout the Bible. Immediately after the Fall we find God represented as approaching man and endeavouring to draw from him acknowledgment of his transgression, for shame of which he had striven to hide himself from the Divine Presence.<sup>5</sup> In the Mosaic Law provision was especially made that confession should have

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xxvii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xxvii. 5. In the New Testament *μετάνοια* is the word regularly used to denote a saving repentance. In describing the spirit in which Judas acted a different word is used—*μεταμεληθεὶς* (S. Matt. xxvii. 3).

<sup>3</sup> S. Luke xv. 18.

<sup>4</sup> 1 S. John i. 9; cf. Prov. xxviii. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Gen. iii. 11-13.

its due and natural place in the process of purification from the guilt attaching to sin.<sup>1</sup> Ezra, in calling the people to repent of their trespass in taking strange wives, urges them to make confession to God,<sup>2</sup> and the Psalmist, when describing the misery consequent upon his sin and the process of his restoration again to the Divine favour, says, "While I held my tongue, my bones consumed away through my daily complaining. . . . I will acknowledge my sin unto Thee, and mine unrighteousness have I not hid. I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord : and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin."<sup>3</sup>

(iii) Again, from a true contrition there naturally flows not only a readiness to confess our faults, but a desire and a purpose to forsake them for the future, and, so far as may be, to make amends for the ill-spent past. A third mark of a genuine repentance is, therefore, *Satisfaction*, or *Amendment*. If the wrong-doing confessed has involved injury to our fellow-men, then the making of such restitution as may be possible forms part of the amendment and necessarily enters into the idea of repentance. Even when the sin has not involved injury to our fellow-men, the notion of satisfaction has its place in our penitence, for there will be a natural desire, by a change of life, by the performance of good works, and by deeds of charity or mercy, to make up for time misspent, and atone for the evil of the past. Thus Daniel exhorted Nebuchadnezzar : "O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and redeem thy sins by righteousness,<sup>4</sup> and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor."<sup>5</sup> Similarly, in the New Testament, S. Paul, speaking before Agrippa, sums up his preaching on the practical side as a declaration that men should repent and turn to God, doing

<sup>1</sup> Lev. v. 5 ; xvi. 21 ; Num. v. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ezra x. 11. <sup>3</sup> Ps. xxxii. 3, 5, 6.

<sup>4</sup> *I.e. almsgiving*, as is indicated in the parallel clause following, and as the word is rendered in the Septuagint and Vulgate. The word "righteousness" is used with exactly the same meaning in S. Matt. vi. 1 (Revised Version). <sup>5</sup> Dan. iv. 27.

works worthy of repentance.<sup>1</sup> It is not, of course, that any such works of our own can, in themselves, form an expiation for past sin; Christ alone, through the infinite dignity of His Person and the perfect sinlessness of His human nature, is capable of offering to God a true Satisfaction for sin. Our Lord made Satisfaction to the Divine justice once for all. Yet, in our measure, we, as members of His Body, are called to appropriate that work of His, and it can only avail for us individually when we manifest in the actions of life, by breaking with sin and avoiding its occasions, by practising self-denial and mortification of our evil desires, and by cultivating righteousness, that our repentance is genuine and heartfelt. At times in the Church's history there has been an inclination to carry the mortification and self-denial of the penitent to an extreme, so as to render this part of repentance excessively rigorous. This was sometimes undoubtedly the case in the Middle Ages when very severe penances were enjoined, but such excess is altogether an abuse, since it tends to obscure the blessed truth of God's lovingkindness and mercy towards the sinner in Christ, and rather leads men to imagine Him a vengeful deity who takes pleasure in the self-inflicted torture of his votaries. It cannot be too strongly insisted on that penance, whether voluntarily undertaken, or whether it take the form of a courageous and willing acceptance of the temporal consequences of sin,<sup>2</sup> must not be conceived as a compensation according to justice, or as in any way meritorious in itself. But apart from these errors, which have sometimes been associated with it, the principle of Satisfaction is a true one, for, since sin has taken away from the honour due to God from the service of our lives, it is right that something should in turn be taken from self and rendered to God, not as an equivalent, which in itself it can never be, but as testifying to our sorrow and our devotion because it is evidence of our desire to make what amends we can and to avoid occasions of sin, at some real cost and sacrifice to ourselves.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxvi. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xii. 5, 6.

Besides repentance the disposition of faith is also requisite in order to restoration after post-Baptismal sin, for faith is a necessary condition for the reception of all spiritual blessing and grace. That sin may be forgiven it is necessary that the penitent should have a firm faith in Christ as the Absolver, and a sure trust in the power of His precious Blood to cleanse from all sin.<sup>1</sup> While repentance and faith are necessary as rightly disposing man to receive the grace of forgiveness, these qualities cannot convey or assure to him remission of sins, for no works, feelings, or emotions of our own can remove the condemnation incurred through sin and put us into right relation with God;<sup>2</sup> God on His side must act, and it is of His mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.<sup>3</sup> Christ alone can absolve, and the sole ground of Absolution is the infinite merit of His Atonement. There is none other Sacrifice for sin than that which He once for all offered,<sup>4</sup> and there is no cleansing for the soul save in His precious Blood. Those who at last shall stand with joy before the Throne of God are they who have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb.<sup>5</sup> The saving power of the Passion of Christ is first applied to the soul in Baptism, and that same power of healing and restoration needs to be re-applied so often as the Christian may depart from grace given and fall into grievous sin after Baptism.

All who call themselves Christians will be found in agreement with what has been said on this subject so far. All agree that repentance and faith are the conditions of pardon, that Christ Himself is the sole Absolver from sin, and that the precious Blood of His Atonement is the only means through which the soul is cleansed. An important question is, however, raised when we come to inquire: Are the merit

<sup>1</sup> 1 S. John i. 7.

<sup>2</sup> "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings."—Art. xi.

<sup>3</sup> Lam. iii. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. vii. 27; ix. 12, 26-8; x. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. i. 5; vii. 14.



of Christ's Atonement and the healing grace of His Absolution applied to the soul *only* in an invisible, spiritual manner, or does Christ use any outward channel as a means of this special grace and as a pledge whereby it may be assured to us? Now, in answer to this question, we may first observe that we should expect, *a priori*, that Christ would bless and use in His Church a material channel for the spiritual grace of remission of the sins of those who have by Baptism been made His members; that He should do so would only be in accord with the principle of the Incarnation, which is the foundation of God's dealings with man in the Christian Dispensation, and with the whole character of the system of the Christian Church, which, resting as it does upon the Incarnation, may rightly be called an extension of it.<sup>1</sup> Agreeably with this, the Catholic Church has always held and taught that the Absolution of Christ is conveyed and assured to the penitent through the sacred Ministry which He Himself instituted and commissioned to act in His Name and by His authority in His Church.<sup>2</sup> The commission to the Apostles not only indicates that sins of Christians may be remitted, but our Lord provided the means of forgiveness and restoration for the penitent when He said to the Ministry, in the persons of those who were first chosen and called to exercise it, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them."<sup>3</sup> Just as in Baptism and in the Eucharist God takes simple and natural things—cleansing with water and sustenance by means of food—and sanctifies them as channels of the grace of spiritual cleansing and spiritual sustenance respectively, so too, in remission of sins, God blesses confession, the

<sup>1</sup> See chap. ix., p. 159: "The power which in Christ is absolute and imperial is in the Apostles delegated and ministerial. It might have been exercised without a Sacrament; but as Christ since the Incarnation works by bodily things, He makes men *συνεργούς*."—Bishop ANDREWES, *Works*, v. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Thus S. Paul writes of himself as forgiving sin "in the person of Christ" (2 Cor. ii. 10; cf. v. 20).

<sup>3</sup> S. John xx. 23.

natural sign of a humble and contrite spirit, as putting man again into a state of reconciliation with Himself, and disposing him to receive the grace of Absolution; and this grace is given, not only invisibly, but in the normal and regular way through the officers of the Church to whom has been committed the Ministry of Reconciliation.<sup>1</sup> It may be added that, if we look at the matter from another point of view, since the sinner has by his fault broken the rules of the sacred Society to which he belongs and done injury to the whole Body, it is natural and right that on his repentance he should be duly restored, by the action of the Church's accredited officials, to the holy fellowship from which he has lapsed by his offence. The means through which forgiveness is bestowed after post-Baptismal sin is, then, Absolution pronounced in the Name of Christ by the Ministry of the Church after confession of sin.

As God Himself is the Absolver confession of sin is made to Him, and as His Absolution is normally conveyed through the Ministry of the Church the confession is regularly made in the presence of God's Minister. The Bible itself furnishes examples which amply illustrate this principle and prove it just and right. In the Old Testament Achan confessed his sin to Joshua after having been solemnly exhorted: "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto Him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me."<sup>2</sup> Similarly we read in the New Testament that when S. John Baptist was baptizing men for the remission of sins, part of the preparation of his disciples for baptism consisted in confession, in his presence, of those sins for which they sought remission.<sup>3</sup> Again, in the account of the progress of the word of the Lord at Ephesus during S. Paul's sojourn in that city, we read that "many of them that had believed came confessing and declaring their deeds."<sup>4</sup> The confession spoken of in this instance was not preparatory

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 18.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. iii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Joshua vii. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Acts xix. 18 (R.V.)

to Baptism, as in the case of the Baptist's disciples already referred to, but a voluntary confession of post-Baptismal sin,<sup>1</sup> before the whole Church or before S. Paul as its Minister, on the part of many who had been struck with awe and convicted of their faults by recent occurrences at Ephesus. A sufficient number of particular instances has been given to show that confession to God before His Minister and representative has the sanction of Scripture,<sup>2</sup> and it will be enough to notice, in concluding this part of our subject, that the form of the Lord's Commission to the Apostles, whom He sent forth in His Name to rule and organise the Church, presupposes that confession is made to them as well as to God. For when it was said to them "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained,"<sup>3</sup> by the very terms of the Commission a certain discretionary and judicial power is vested in them as Christ's Ministers, which for its due exercise depends upon knowledge on their part of the faults for which Absolution may be given to the penitent, or withheld from the sinner, if this latter course should be deemed expedient in the interest either of the individual offender or of the Church at large.

The Commission given by Christ to the Apostles, which has just been referred to, has, in all parts of the Church from the earliest times, been understood as delegating Christ's own authority<sup>4</sup> to those whom He sends forth as His representatives, and as empowering the Christian Ministry to absolve sinners in His Name.<sup>5</sup> Though no outward material sign was expressly appointed by the Lord Himself as a means and

<sup>1</sup> The expression "that had believed" in Acts xix. 18 evidently describes the whole process of conversion and admission to the Church, and therefore should be understood as including Baptism, just as also in Acts xix. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Other examples might be given ; *e.g.* the case of Nathan and David (2 Sam. xii. 1, 13). <sup>3</sup> S. John xx. 23. <sup>4</sup> S. Mark ii. 10.

<sup>5</sup> "Although this power (of Absolution) was committed to the Apostles originally, it was not given to them individually, for it was needed to the world's end ; nor yet as common to all Christians, but as to Ministers, Priests, or Preachers, having others to succeed them."—Bishop ANDREWES, *Works*, v. 92.

pledge of Absolution, yet it is evident that the spiritual grace of remission of sins was promised by Him, and was attached to the action of the constituted Ministers of the Church, when He said : "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them."<sup>1</sup> This is recognised in the Anglican Homilies,<sup>2</sup> and it was doubtless on this account that there was a fairly widespread disposition amongst Reformers in the sixteenth century, while rejecting the Mediæval number of Seven Sacraments, to define *Three* rites as "Sacraments of the Gospel"—Baptism, the Holy Eucharist, and *Penance*.<sup>3</sup> The Anglican Church, since the Reformation, has refused to place Penance on the same level with Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, on the ground that we do not read in the New Testament that Christ expressly attached the spiritual grace of Absolution to a particular outward sign;<sup>4</sup> but our Church, nevertheless, assigns to Penance as a Sacramental ordinance a due place in her disciplinary system, and has always taught, and still teaches, that her Priests are, by virtue of their Ordination, authorised to exercise the power which Christ delegated to the Apostolic Ministry, and to absolve the penitent. That this power of Absolution is claimed for the Priests of the Church is plain from the Ordinal. In the *Form of Ordering of Priests* the Ordinand is directed to kneel before the Bishop, who, at the moment of the Imposition of hands, uses this form of words : "Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven ;

<sup>1</sup> S. John xx. 23.

<sup>2</sup> "Absolution hath the promise of forgiveness of sin."—*Homily of Common Prayer and Sacraments*, p. 376 (ed. S.P.C.K.). "Christ ordained the authority of the keys to excommunicate notorious sinners, and to absolve them which are truly penitent."—*Homily for Whitsunday*, p. 495.

<sup>3</sup> The Anglican *Ten Articles* (1536) treat of three Sacraments : (1) the Sacrament of Baptism ; (2) the Sacrament of Penance ; (3) the Sacrament of the Altar. Further, that Absolution is in some sense a Sacrament is implied in the Homilies when it is stated that "Absolution is no such Sacrament as Baptism and the Communion are."—*Homily of Common Prayer and Sacraments*, p. 377.

<sup>4</sup> See above, chap. ix., p. 149.

and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained." The Anglican Church has thus deliberately, and in the face of criticism,<sup>1</sup> retained in her formula for the Ordination of Priests those very words of Christ which have ever been acknowledged by all as the Scriptural basis of the power of Absolution claimed for the Ministry. Nor is this all; the Anglican Church seems to take special care that the lay-people shall not be kept in ignorance of the fact that her Priests are commissioned to absolve sinners, for, after his Ordination as Priest the Minister is required by the rule of the Church to recite twice daily—at Morning and at Evening Prayer—the Absolution, in which he announces to the assembled congregation that God has given him "power and commandment to declare and pronounce to His people, being penitent, the Absolution and remission of their sins." It is to be noted that provision is made in the Church's system for the exercise of this power conferred upon the Priest at Ordination.

(a) In time of public service :—

1. A form of Absolution "to be pronounced by the Priest alone" after the recitation of the General Confession occurs in Morning and Evening Prayer. The fact that the reading of this particular part of the service is by rubric confined to "the Priest alone" indicates that, in the intention of those who compiled the Daily Offices in the Prayer Book, this Absolution was meant to be an exercise of the power conferred through Ordination, availing for the full forgiveness of the sins of those who join, with true penitence, in the Confession preceding.

2. A similar expression of this power is found in the form of Absolution, which again can only be used by the Priest, occurring in the Communion Office, after a humble Confession of sin on the part of those present.

<sup>1</sup> Viz. on the part of the Puritans who objected to the formula used in ordaining Priests, alleging that the power to remit sins was miraculous and confined to the Apostles. In consequence of attacks from this quarter it was deemed necessary by the Ecclesiastical authorities, in 1563, to defend the Ordinal as containing nothing "that of itself is superstitious or ungodly" (see Art. xxxvi.).

(b) Not only are forms of Absolution recited in public service, but particular Absolution by the Priest in private is provided for:—

1. In the first of the Exhortations to be read at the Celebration of the Eucharist the Priest solemnly sets forth before the Congregation the conditions of a worthy Communion, and finally admonishes his people: "If there be any of you who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy Word *he may receive the benefit of Absolution*, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness."

2. In the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, a form of words is given for the direct exercise of the Ministry of Absolution towards an individual who has made special confession of his sins: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences; And by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The teaching of the Prayer Book as to Confession and Absolution is now recognised by men of widely different opinions, as the following utterances will show:—(a) *The Bishop of Lincoln* (Dr. King): "They must explain to the people what the teaching of the Church of England really was with regard to private Confession, making clear to them both the reality of the blessing she was commissioned to give, and the perfect liberty of her children." (b) *The Bishop of Worcester* (Dr. Perowne, addressing Missioners at Birmingham): "If the sinner longed to make known his grief, they might listen and receive his confession in the church . . . it would be very wrong to say, do not listen to the confessions of those who were troubled in conscience." (c) *The Chairman of the Congregational Union* (Rev. A. Rowland): "Unfortunately, the root of the Confessional lies in the Prayer Book; indeed this is implied in the fact that the Absolution may only be read by one who is in Priest's orders. Therefore I doubt if the Bishops could put down Confession, even if they desired to do so."



It has now been fully shown that forgiveness and restoration after post-Baptismal sin is bestowed through Absolution pronounced by the regularly constituted Ministry of the Church, after Confession on the part of the penitent. The particular conditions or circumstances under which the Confession is made and the Absolution given may, however, vary; they need not be at all times, or in all cases, the same, and the Church has power to regulate them.

1. In the Primitive Church those who had been guilty of grievous sin<sup>1</sup> were required, before their Absolution and re-admission to Communion, to make confession publicly before the Church, and a very rigorous system of open penance was enforced. The severe character of the discipline of the *Ex-omologesis*,<sup>2</sup> as it was called, in the time of Tertullian may be gathered from that Father's description. He writes that "it obliges a man to change both his clothing and his diet, to lie in sackcloth and ashes, to let his body become covered with dirt, to afflict his soul with sorrow, by severe treatment of himself to change the former sinful course of his life . . . to quicken his prayers by fasting, to groan, to weep and to cry to the Lord God day and night, to prostrate himself before the presbyters and to kneel to the beloved of God and beg of all the brethren that they will be intercessors for his pardon."<sup>3</sup>

2. At a very early period this Primitive penitential system underwent some modification, and it was recommended that penitents should confess their sins privately to a spiritual adviser, who might judge of the expediency of public confession and penance, and advise it if he deemed that it would tend to the quieting of the penitent's conscience and the edification of the Church at large. Origen alludes to and recommends the practice of seeking out a confessor who may decide whether the offence which has been committed ought to be exposed and dealt with in the assembly of the whole Church, and the decision, he notes, is to be guided by the consideration whether it is likely that both the rest may be

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* idolatry, apostasy in time of persecution, adultery, or murder.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.* "confession."

<sup>3</sup> TERTULLIAN, *De Penitentia*, cap. ix.

edified, and the penitent himself the more readily healed.<sup>1</sup> S. Augustine, in like manner, urges private confession upon the penitent as a first step, to be followed, when judged expedient, by public penance. "When a man," he says, "shall have passed against himself a sentence of most severe medicine . . . let him come to the Bishops, by whom the keys are ministered in the Church; and now beginning to be as it were a good son (the order of his Mother's members being preserved) let him receive from those that are set over the Sacraments the manner of his satisfaction: that, devout and suppliant in offering the sacrifice of a troubled heart, he may yet do that which may not only profit himself to the receiving of salvation, but also others for example. That if his sin stands not only in grievous evil to himself, but also in so great scandal to others, and this seem to the Bishop to be expedient to the interest of the Church, let him not refuse to do penance in the knowledge of many or even of the whole people."<sup>2</sup> When this practice of preliminary private confession became general, it also began to be the custom for the Bishop to appoint, with a view to the proper regulation of the penitential system, a regular official as Penitentiary to hear private confessions and to determine in each case whether it were expedient that the confession should be publicly made, and penance publicly done, or not.<sup>3</sup>

3. The practice of private confession to a Priest, thus introduced, came in process of time to supersede the earlier system of open penance. It cannot be fairly said that this was a retrograde movement, or that it involved the introduction of any new principle; on the contrary, it was only a natural, even an inevitable, development. From the quotations already given, it is apparent that as early as the time of Origen and S. Augustine doubts and scruples must have been very generally prevalent as to the advisability and propriety of making public certain grievous and scandalous

<sup>1</sup> ORIGEN, *On Psalm xxxvii.*, Hom. 2.

<sup>2</sup> S. AUGUSTINE, *Serm.* 351.

<sup>3</sup> See CHEETHAM, *Church History, Early Period*, p. 332.

offences before the whole body of the faithful. While the growth of private confession, with a corresponding decline of public penance, was stimulated by a sense of propriety, it was also the natural result of the extension of Christianity to society in general, for it is manifest that sins which might fittingly be acknowledged in a small assembly of brethren who were bound together by the most intimate union of thought and feeling, could not with the same propriety be confessed before a large gathering of more or less indifferent persons. The acceptance of Christianity by the ruling power also contributed to the same result, because sins which it had been usual to confess before the congregation would sometimes bring the offender within reach of the civil law, and in some cases, *e.g.* that of adultery, would also implicate other parties besides the confessing penitent. In view of changed circumstances some readjustment of the Church's penitential system thus became a practical necessity. In the West it was mainly through Leo the Great<sup>1</sup> that private confession came to be recognised as the normal and regular practice. Pope Leo wisely recognised that the shame of publicly confessing faults before indifferent persons and enemies might reasonably deter many from the remedy of penance, and that more would be provoked to repentance if the conscience of the person confessing were not published to the ears of the people, and accordingly he ruled that confession to be sufficient to clear the conscience of the sinner and to assure Absolution, which was first made to God, and then also to the Priest.<sup>2</sup> Our own Archbishop Theodore,<sup>3</sup> whose *Penitential* exercised a very wide influence in Western Christendom, followed the same course as Pope Leo, and it would seem that by the latter part of the seventh century all public penance was discontinued. In the Middle Ages private Confession and Absolution came to be ranked as a Sacrament

<sup>1</sup> Pope from A.D. 440 to 461.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.* 80. LABBÉ, vol. iii. p. 1374; quoted in OWEN, *Introduction to Dogmatic Theology*, p. 432.

<sup>3</sup> Archbishop of Canterbury from A.D. 668 to 693.

of the Gospel, and its use was enforced as necessary to salvation,<sup>1</sup> a position persevered in and stereotyped by the Church of Rome at the Council of Trent, which anathematised all who deny that Penance is "truly and properly a Sacrament instituted by Christ our Lord," and that "Sacramental Confession was instituted, or is necessary to salvation *jure divino*."<sup>2</sup>

4. In the sixteenth century some of the leading Anglican Reformers were desirous of returning to the Primitive system of open Penance,<sup>3</sup> but finding such a course inexpedient and practically impossible, and at the same time recognising that particular regulations with reference to such a matter may legitimately vary, and that the Church has power to order them according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners,<sup>4</sup> our Reformers made no attempt to revive the obsolete system which involved a public confession and penance by the individual before the whole congregation. On the other hand they departed from the Mediæval rule of the Western Church which had originated under the Papal dominion, and which required private Confession to a Priest from all Christians as a matter of necessity, at least once in the year. Absolution was made as far as possible a public Ministry of the Church, by the incorporation into the Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer, and the addition to the Communion Office of General Confessions of sin to be said by all present followed by a form of Absolution to be pronounced by the Priest. At the same time it was not contemplated by the Reformers that private Confession to a Priest, or auricular Confession, as it has been called, should be altogether discontinued in the Anglican Church. Our Church does not set forth such special Confession as of necessity binding upon her members, but assigns to it a due

<sup>1</sup> A general law was enacted at the *Fourth Lateran Council* (1215) requiring that every Christian who has reached years of discretion should confess to a Priest at least once in the year (Canon xxi., *Omnis utriusque sexus*).  
<sup>2</sup> *Council of Trent*, Session xiv., Canons i. and vi.

<sup>3</sup> This desire is expressed in the opening words of the Address at the commencement of the *Commination*.  
<sup>4</sup> See Art. xxxiv.

and reasonable place as a means of grace to be used by her children voluntarily as they feel the need of it,<sup>1</sup> for Confession to a Priest with a view to receiving Absolution (1) is distinctly recommended for such as feel scruples about coming to Communion on account of a disquieted conscience,<sup>2</sup> and (2) is expressly enjoined upon a sick person whose conscience is troubled with any weighty matter.<sup>3</sup> The plain intimations in the Prayer Book as to the intention of the Reformed Church of England in the matter under discussion are confirmed by the incidental testimony of the Canons of 1604, where, in dealing with the question of the presentation of crimes to the Ordinary, it is assumed that the Confession of secret and hidden sin to the Minister is a normal thing in the English Church, and what is known as the seal of Confession is strictly guarded.<sup>4</sup>

The particular regulations which have been laid down at various periods respecting the restoration of the sinner after Baptism have now been briefly sketched, and it is apparent that alike under the Primitive system of public penance, and under our present system, in which Absolution is pronounced by the Priest in the congregation after a general Confession or

<sup>1</sup> The Lutheran Reformers retained the practice of private Confession, but with the provision that it must not be considered necessary that all sins should be enumerated therein.—*Augsburg Confession*, part ii. Art. iv. ; *Saxon Confession*, Art. xvi. ; *Wurtemberg Confession*, Art. xiv.

<sup>2</sup> See the first Exhortation in the *Communion Office*.

<sup>3</sup> See the Rubric in *The Order for the Visitation of the Sick*: "Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special Confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which Confession the Priest shall absolve him," etc.

<sup>4</sup> "Provided always, that if any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the Minister, for the unburdening of his conscience, and to receive spiritual consolation and ease of mind from him ; we do not any way bind the said Minister by this our Constitution, but do straitly charge and admonish him, that he do not at any time reveal and make known to any person whatsoever any crime or offence so committed to his trust and secrecy (except they be such crimes as by the laws of this realm his own life may be called into question for concealing the same), under pain of irregularity."—*Canon 113*.

is given privately to an individual after a special Confession, the principle which has ruled the Church's action has been throughout the same, viz. that restoration is given to the penitent through Absolution pronounced in the Name of Christ by the duly constituted Ministry, after Confession of sin.

It has been shown that the baptized may fall from the state of grace, and that God in His mercy has provided a remedy for post-Baptismal sin, for upon repentance and Confession restoration is bestowed through the Ministry of Absolution. In case of grievous and notorious sin it may sometimes be deemed necessary to defer Absolution and to exclude the offender from participation in the Eucharist for a season,<sup>1</sup> yet wilful sin which may warrant such treatment is not viewed by the Church as unpardonable, and restoration to a state of grace and to full privilege of membership in the Church is offered to all through Penance. The discipline of Penance of course implies true penitence and purpose of amendment on the part of the offender, but it is within the bounds of possibility that a Christian who has fallen into grievous sin may not be disposed to acknowledge his fault or show any sign of repentance, and to meet the case of impenitent sinners there is provided in the Church the discipline of *Excommunication*.<sup>2</sup>

In dealing with this subject it should be remembered in the first place that, as has been already remarked,<sup>3</sup> since the Church of God in this world is a visible society or brotherhood of men it is only in accord with reason and justice that she should have power to exclude from her fellowship such of her members as may defy her lawfully constituted authority or wilfully break her rules and violate the conditions of their membership. There may have been, and may still be, disputes as to who are to exercise the right of Excommunica-

<sup>1</sup> This temporary exclusion from the privileges of Church membership is known as *Lesser Excommunication*.

<sup>2</sup> Known as *Greater Excommunication* to distinguish it from a temporary suspension from Communion.

<sup>3</sup> See above, p. 298.



tion, or in what cases it should be exercised, but the right itself cannot reasonably be questioned, for just as in the State there is authority to inflict penalties even to the extent of banishment or death, so in the Church, or in any other organised society of men, there ought to be a power of punishing unworthy members, and of excluding the incorrigible.

Such power belonged to the congregation of Israel under the Old Covenant, for according to the Law certain offences rendered him who committed them liable to the penalty of being cut off from the people of God,<sup>1</sup> a punishment which, in earlier times, seems generally to have implied a capital sentence,<sup>2</sup> this association of temporal punishment with Ecclesiastical censure being accounted for by the intimate connexion of things civil and things religious under the Mosaic economy, and also by the principle of setting forth spiritual realities under material figures, which to so large an extent underlies the regulations of the Old Testament dispensation. After the Babylonian Exile, however, the temporal punishment which under the Theocracy had been naturally associated with Ecclesiastical discipline was no longer connected with Excommunication, and from the time of Ezra onward we find that exclusion from the congregation of God's people, apart from any civil penalties in consequence, began to take its place as a regular and recognised means of enforcing discipline. The New Testament writings contain more than one reference to the exercise of such discipline by the Jewish Church in the time of our Lord. S. John has left it on record that the Jewish authorities determined that anyone who acknowledged our Lord's Messiahship should be put out of the Synagogue,<sup>3</sup> and that through fear of incurring this dreaded penalty many of the chief rulers who believed on Christ did not openly avow their belief;<sup>4</sup> our

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* Gen. xvii. 14; Exod. xii. 15; xxx. 33; Lev. vii. 20-7.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* Exod. xxxi. 14; Lev. xvii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> S. John ix. 22.

<sup>4</sup> S. John xii. 42; cf. xix. 38.

Lord, too, on more than one occasion intimated to the disciples that their championship of His Messianic claim would render them liable to the same punishment of exclusion from the Synagogue.<sup>1</sup>

Not only do the Gospels thus witness to the fact that the Jewish Church exercised the power of Excommunication, but it is further evident from sayings of our Lord which are recorded by the Evangelists that He anticipated, and provided for, the exercise of the same power in the Society of His own disciples, in that new Dispensation which was to succeed to the position and privileges of the Jewish Church, which was destined in the Divine counsel to supersede the Church of the Old Covenant, and which it was the work of Christ to found in the world. The Lord anticipated and assumed as a matter of course that His Church of the New Covenant would have the same power of excluding the obstinately unruly and impenitent which the Church of God under the earlier Dispensation had possessed, and which every properly organised society of men should have in order to healthy life and activity. Christ assumed this when He gave directions to the Apostles as to the treatment of offenders, and laid it down that an erring brother, who, after repeated admonition in private and before one or two of the brethren, should persevere in his wrong course, should be brought before the Church, and, if he should still prove unrepentant and contumacious, should then be regarded as an heathen and publican.<sup>2</sup> The import of this saying would be well understood by those to whom it was addressed because the particular terms used were adopted by our Lord from the current phraseology of the Jews, by whom the heathen and publicans were alike looked upon with abhorrence and regarded as without the pale of religious society. Besides this explicit recognition of the right to exercise Excommunication, we have it recorded that Christ empowered the Apostles to use it, for, in conferring upon them as the rulers of His Church the power to absolve repentant sinners, He in the same breath authorised them

<sup>1</sup> S. Luke vi. 22 ; S. John xvi. 2.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 15-17.

to exclude the impenitent; He said not only "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them," but added also "Whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."<sup>1</sup>

The Church has always claimed to have the power of Excommunication, and has not seldom exercised it when occasion so demanded from the time of the Apostles onwards. In the New Testament we read of two examples of the passing of the formal sentence by S. Paul.

(i) First there is the case of the incestuous offender at Corinth. In spite of the presence amongst them of such scandal "as is not even among the Gentiles," the Corinthian Christians had all the while been puffed up, and did not rather mourn, that he who had done the deed might be taken away from among them.<sup>2</sup> The Apostle accordingly wrote, "I verily, being absent in body, but present in spirit, have already, as though I were present, judged him that hath so wrought this thing, in the Name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. . . . Put away the wicked man from among yourselves."<sup>3</sup> The expression "deliver unto Satan," here used, refers doubtless to the penalty of Excommunication. In the New Testament two spheres are conceived as existing side by side—the Kingdom of God, or of Christ, the sphere of the Divine Spirit's activity, where is light, health, and life for man, and outside this Kingdom the realm of Satan,<sup>4</sup> where is darkness, disease, and death. The deliverance of man from the power of Satan and his admission to the Church of God are very frequently spoken of under the figure of translation from darkness to light,<sup>5</sup> and the "delivery to Satan"

<sup>1</sup> S. John xx. 23.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. v. 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. v. 3-5, 13.

<sup>4</sup> The Evil One is called by our Lord "the prince of this world" (S. John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11) and by S. Paul "the god of this world" (2 Cor. iv. 4); the same Apostle also writes of evil spirits as "world-rulers of this darkness" (Eph. vi. 12).

<sup>5</sup> Acts xxvi. 18; Eph. v. 8; Col. i. 13; 1 Thess. v. 5; 1 S. Peter ii. 9.

would naturally mean the reversal of that process by exclusion from the Kingdom of Christ.<sup>1</sup> When unfaithful members of the Church plainly declare by their actions that they choose rather to obey the laws of Satan than the commands of Christ, the kingdom of the former is the place to which they properly belong, and the Church is justified in refusing to allow them to be partakers of the spiritual privileges of the children of the Kingdom of God. When men have, by their own choice and by the actions of their life, in effect placed themselves outside her Communion, the Church solemnly and formally ratifies their own deed and refuses to receive them back until they repent and testify their desire to be restored again to a state of salvation. We should mark further that, in connexion with the case of the Corinthian offender, an important principle clearly appears—the authority to excommunicate, and in fact all power of exercising spiritual discipline, belongs to the Church as a whole; so that the exclusion of the unworthy is the act of the whole Body, solemnly performed in public assembly.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, as is natural, the exercise of the power is entrusted to the duly-appointed Ministry of the Church, to the Apostles in the first instance,<sup>3</sup> then to the Ministry derived by succession from them.

(ii) The other case in which S. Paul passed sentence of Excommunication is incidentally mentioned by him in his First Epistle to Timothy, where, having occasion to refer to

<sup>1</sup> Some understand the “delivery to Satan” to signify expulsion from the Church accompanied by an authoritative infliction of disease or death, this awful power of inflicting bodily suffering being confined to the Apostles, and special instances of its exercise being recorded in the cases of Ananias and Sapphira, and of Elymas.

<sup>2</sup> “Ye being gathered together” (1 Cor. v. 4); “the punishment which was inflicted by the many” (2 Cor. ii. 6); “tell it unto the Church: and if he refuse to hear the Church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican” (S. Matt. xviii. 17).

<sup>3</sup> “I have already, as though I were present, judged him” (1 Cor. v. 3); “what I have forgiven . . . for your sakes have I forgiven it in the person of Christ” (2 Cor. ii. 10).

Hymenæus and Alexander as amongst those who had made shipwreck concerning the Faith, the Apostle adds that he had "delivered them unto Satan,"<sup>1</sup> using the same phrase which occurs with reference to the passing of the sentence upon the Corinthian offender.

Illustrations need not now be given of the well-known fact that the Church has made use of the power of Excommunication in all ages since Apostolic times, but it may be well to summarise the evidence which indicates that our own Church still claims the right to use it, though for several reasons its exercise is practically in abeyance.

(a) Power is given to the "Curate" to repel from Communion "an open and notorious evil liver," provided that every Minister so repelling any . . . shall be obliged to give an account of the same to the Ordinary within fourteen days after at the farthest. And the Ordinary shall proceed against the offending person according to the Canon.<sup>2</sup>

(b) The rubric after the Nicene Creed in the Communion Office directs that at that point in the service, when other notices are given to the congregation, Excommunications shall be read.

(c) The rubric at the Commencement of the Order for the Burial of the Dead provides that the Office ensuing is not to be used for any that die Excommunicate.

(d) The thirty-third of the Thirty-nine Articles deals with the subject. The Article does not prove, or even state the right of the Church to excommunicate unworthy members, but assumes it as unquestioned, and proceeds to lay down the attitude which the faithful should observe towards the Excommunicate person.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. i. 20.

<sup>2</sup> See the rubrics prefixed to the *Communion Office*.

<sup>3</sup> "That person which by open denunciation of the Church is rightly cut off from the unity of the Church, and excommunicated, ought to be taken of the whole multitude of the faithful as an Heathen and Publican, until he be openly reconciled by penance, and received into the Church by a Judge that hath authority thereunto."—Art. xxxiii.

(e) In 1571 Convocation sanctioned a form to be used in publishing a sentence of Excommunication.<sup>1</sup>

(f) Frequent mention is made of Excommunication in the Canons of 1604. It is there stated to be the penalty due to many offences, amongst the number being denial of the Royal Supremacy,<sup>2</sup> denial of the Apostolic character of the Church of England,<sup>3</sup> and impugning of the Prayer Book, Articles and Rites or Ceremonies of the Church.<sup>4</sup> Excommunication is also in the same Canons declared to be the proper punishment for schismatics,<sup>5</sup> maintainers of Conventicles<sup>6</sup> and notorious offenders against public morality.<sup>7</sup> It is, moreover, provided<sup>8</sup> that Ministers shall in time of Divine Service denounce and declare Excommunicate those who stand lawfully Excommunicate.

The summary which has been given affords ample proof of the intention that Excommunication, in its due place, should form a regular part of the disciplinary administration of the Church. In practice, however, it has long fallen into disuse, the machinery of the Ecclesiastical Courts being difficult to move,<sup>9</sup> and Excommunication itself having been to a great extent brought into discredit by an improper association of legal consequences and civil penalties with the Ecclesiastical sentence. The right of the Church to exercise disciplinary power over her members, however, still remains, having been carefully guarded and upheld by the Act of Parliament<sup>10</sup> which

<sup>1</sup> After a statement of the offence this form continues: "therefore I would notify you of this besides, that our Bishop, in the Name and by the authority of Almighty God, has excommunicated him from all fellowship in the Church of God, and has cut him off from the Body of Christ as a dead member." See the form quoted at length in *The Thirty-nine Articles and the Age of the Reformation*, pp. 273, 432.

<sup>2</sup> Canon 2.      <sup>3</sup> Canon 3.      <sup>4</sup> Canons 4, 5, 6.      <sup>5</sup> Canon 10.

<sup>6</sup> Canon 11.      <sup>7</sup> Canon 109.      <sup>8</sup> By Canon 65.

<sup>9</sup> Sentence of *Greater Excommunication* can only be inflicted by a judge in a duly constituted Ecclesiastical Court. This is implied in the wording of Art. xxxiii.: "that person which by open denunciation of the Church is rightly (*vite*) cut off from the unity of the Church."

<sup>10</sup> 53 Geo. III. c. 127. Until the passing of this Act excommunicate persons were legally disqualified from bringing actions, serving on juries, appearing as witnesses, and from practising as attorneys.



abolished civil penalties connected with Excommunication, and it can scarcely be doubted that it would conduce to a healthier Church life if a due use of the undisputed and inherent power of discipline in needful cases could in some way be provided for.

The effect of sentence of Excommunication is that the offender is cut off from the unity of the Church,<sup>1</sup> shut out from participation in public prayer and Sacraments, and in fact excluded from all Christian fellowship. This is what is involved in our Lord's injunction to regard as a heathen and publican him who obstinately refuses to hear an informal admonition from the brethren, and finally turns a deaf ear to the official remonstrance of the Church.<sup>2</sup> Apostolic directions in the New Testament as to the attitude of the faithful towards offenders closely follow this ruling of Christ. S. Paul in his earliest extant Epistles exhorts his converts to warn them that are unruly, at the same time dealing patiently with them,<sup>3</sup> but, if such warning should be without avail, he solemnly commands in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ that the faithful should withdraw themselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the Apostolic tradition,<sup>4</sup> and that they should have no company with him who obeys not the written Apostolic injunction.<sup>5</sup> Further, writing to the Christians at Corinth, where grave scandal had been caused by a case of incest, S. Paul exhorts not to keep company, or even to eat, with the brother who is a fornicator,<sup>6</sup> and the incestuous offender upon whom the Apostle had formally pronounced sentence of Excommunication is, accordingly, to be excluded from Christian fellowship.<sup>7</sup> Similar directions, again, are given with reference to the treatment of those who foment schism or who teach false doctrine in the Church. To the Romans S. Paul writes: "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them";<sup>8</sup> and again, he bids Timothy turn

<sup>1</sup> Art. xxxiii.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 15-17.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Thess. v. 14.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Thess. iii. 6.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Thess. iii. 14.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. v. 11.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. v. 13.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. xvi. 17.

away from such as, while they hold the form of godliness, deny its power.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, it is made clear that, as in the case of those who offend against the moral law, the extreme measure is not to be taken against heretics or schismatics until repeated warning has been given; to this effect runs the rule given to Titus who was set over the Church in Crete—"A man that is heretical, after the first and second admonition, reject."<sup>2</sup> S. John's disciplinary regulations are parallel with S. Paul's when he enjoins that the man who transgresses and abides not in the doctrine of Christ is not to be received by the faithful into their houses, nor to be bidden God speed.<sup>3</sup>

Though by Excommunication the brotherhood of grace is dissolved, the brotherhood of nature still remains, for Ecclesiastical censure concerns a man's spiritual privileges and, properly, his natural or civil rights and obligations are unaffected by it. Accordingly, a head of a household who is excommunicated does not *ipso facto* lose authority in his family, nor is one who holds responsible office in the state, by reason of sentence of Excommunication, deprived of that office or disqualified for the fulfilment of his political duties. This was certainly the rule in the earliest ages when the Church was clearly marked off from the world and the civil power was indifferent, if not actively opposed to the cause of Christianity. A change in the scope and effects of the Greater Excommunication followed, however, when the power of Excommunication, strictly speaking lodged in the Church as a body, passed more immediately into the hands of the bishops as irresponsible authorities, which it tended to do in the West generally and more especially in the case of the Mediæval Popes. With the growth of the temporal power of the Papacy there almost inevitably ensued an overlapping of the secular and spiritual spheres leading to much confusion and to various abuses of discipline, so that, amongst other things, Excommunication was made in the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Titus iii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> 2 S. John 9, 10.

Middle Ages not only to affect spiritual privileges, but also to involve loss of political rights and exclusion from public offices. Thus under Pope Innocent III. it was declared<sup>1</sup> that Excommunication put an end to all civil rights and dignities, and disqualified the person upon whom sentence was passed from holding property under the state. A tremendous power was in this way put into the hands of the Popes which, at times, they did not hesitate to use in such a way as to release men from their natural obligations and to absolve subjects from allegiance to their lawful sovereign.<sup>2</sup> Further, when Popes, as occasionally happened, used their spiritual authority to further political schemes and ambitions, resorting to Excommunication or Interdict<sup>3</sup> to promote their own temporal aggrandisement, not only did moral confusion result, but we cannot wonder that such action brought the Church's disciplinary power into discredit, and caused its exercise to be viewed with suspicion, resented, and even forcibly resisted.

Just as it is in every way desirable that the proper scope of Ecclesiastical censure should be regularly observed, so too it is of the utmost importance that its true purpose should be steadily kept in view, lest it should be abused through being exercised on personal grounds, or from any unworthy motive, or upon insufficient cause. The purpose of Excommunication is none other than a merciful one, and the passing of this extreme sentence is only justifiable when regard is paid on the one hand to the well-being of the Church in general, and on the other to the ultimate spiritual benefit of the person excommunicated.

<sup>1</sup> At the *Fourth Lateran Council*, A.D. 1215.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* the sentence of Excommunication pronounced against the Emperor Henry IV. (A.D. 1102) was regarded as setting his subjects free from their allegiance to him.

<sup>3</sup> Interdict is sentence of *Lesser Excommunication* passed upon a number of persons collectively, and was inflicted upon a diocese, a province, or a kingdom, according to circumstances. Our own country was laid under an Interdict (1208-13) by Pope Innocent III. with the object of compelling King John to accept Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury.

When a man obstinately persists in his evil course sentence of Excommunication is, in the last resort, passed upon him in the interest of the Body to which he belongs, that it may be duly protected against corruption. The action of Ecclesiastical authority in such a case is analogous to that of a wise physician who, after the patient treatment of a diseased limb with all his professional skill, finds that the mischief is too deep-seated to be cured, and having regard to the health of the body as a whole, is at length obliged to have recourse to amputation. The Church is justified in pursuing a parallel course in spiritual matters, since evil communications corrupt good manners,<sup>1</sup> and, besides, the making an example of a notorious offender acts as a wholesome deterrent. In passing sentence upon him who had caused so grave a scandal at Corinth S. Paul urges the necessity of the step in consideration for the well-being of the Christian community: "Know ye not," he says, "that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out the old leaven that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are, as Christians ideally, unleavened."<sup>2</sup>

But in thus regarding the welfare of the Church in general, the highest interests of the excommunicate individual are not at the same time ignored. Even the extreme step of expulsion from Christian fellowship is taken, not with the idea of confirming the offender in his evil ways or of driving him to desperation, but, on the contrary, in the hope that he may be ashamed, and, through the mercy of God, be brought to repent of his wrong-doing. This merciful purpose towards the excommunicate is very apparent in those passages of the New Testament which bear upon the subject. When S. Paul warns his converts to note the man who obeys not the written Apostolic injunction, and to have no company with him, he is careful to add the object of such an attitude on the part of the faithful towards the disobedient; it is "to the end that he may be ashamed."<sup>3</sup> The Excommunication of the wrong-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 33.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. v. 6, 7.<sup>3</sup> 2 Thess. iii. 14.

doer at Corinth seems to have effected this purpose, and to have wrought in him the grace of repentance, for, in the sequel, we find S. Paul advising his restoration again lest he should be driven to despair. "Sufficient to such a one," he writes, "is this punishment which was inflicted by the many; so that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow . . . and that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan."<sup>1</sup> That in the intention of the Church Excommunication is, as regards its effect upon the person excommunicated, not merely damnatory, but corrective, is expressly stated in the two New Testament cases where the passing of the formal sentence is recorded. The ultimate end in view, in the exclusion of the incestuous Corinthian from the Church, was that his spirit might be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus,<sup>2</sup> and again when S. Paul excommunicated Hymenæus and Alexander, it was in the hope that under this severe discipline they might renounce their error and be taught not to blaspheme.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of Excommunication may be well illustrated from God's dealings with His ancient people, whose exile in Babylon was a kind of Excommunication of the whole nation. The Israelites had misused their high privileges as the chosen people of God, and had proved deaf to the repeated warnings of the prophets Divinely commissioned and sent to them. Accordingly, those privileges were at length forfeited: God, rejected by His people, in turn rejected them, they were deported to a strange land and were deprived of all share in worship and sacrifice because they were cut off from access to God's Holy Temple. Yet, looking back upon history, we can now see that the Babylonian Cap-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7, 11.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. v. 5.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. i. 20. Cf. S. Ignatius' counsel as to the attitude of the faithful towards false teachers. He speaks of them as wild beasts in human form—"men whom not only ye should not receive, but, if it were possible, not so much as meet them; only pray ye for them, if haply they may repent. This is indeed difficult, but Jesus Christ, our true Life, hath power over it."—*Epistle to the Smyrniæans*, iv. 1.

tivity was not a final rejection of Israel but a severe discipline through which the nation was, in God's merciful providence, purified from idolatry, and eventually restored to its lost inheritance. When the Church, after earnest and repeated expostulation, in much grief resorts to Excommunication of her members, those words which the seer of old puts into the mouth of Jerusalem mourning for her exiled children just express her feeling and her hope :—

“ My hope is in the Everlasting that He will save you.

. . . . .

I sent you out with mourning and weeping ;  
But God will give you to me again with joy and gladness for ever.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Baruch iv. 22, 23.





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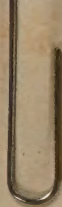
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